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THE NATION

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EDITORIALS

The Danger of Definitions

The latest address by the President and briefing by Dr. Kissinger underscore the near impossibility of carrying on with them a critical dialogue about the war. The more one reads and hears what they have to say, the clearer it becomes that U.S. policy is almost hopelessly enshrouded in myth and illusion. From the outset, American policy in Vietnam has been based not on misconceptions or erroneous judgments but on willfully false definitions. Over a seven-year period, these definitions have been endlessly repeated and are now firmly imbedded in innumerable policy statements. By dint of bipartisan repetition at the highest levels, these definitions have, to some extent, been accepted by a large section of the public as unassailable propositions. Still worse, the decision makers are so entangled in these false assumptions that they habitually deceive themselves.

A fundamental rule in the rational handling of embittered controversies is that each party should be able to give a fair and accurate statement of the other's position. Neither the President nor Dr. Kissinger is capable of such an exercise. They cannot or will not see the situation as the North Vietnamese must see it or, for that matter, as the Russians or Chinese may see it. Or if they can, they are so caught up in their own mistakes that they cannot afford to make the effort. Worse, they must cling to these accumulated false definitions in order to avoid acknowledging profound misjudgments by themselves and their predecessors. So they take new and steadily more dangerous risks in a desperate effort to redefine the situation in a way that will rally domestic opinion and shore up a disintegrating political position.

Thus the President's latest gamble is not primarily designed to "win" the war—his own actions and statements imply that it has been lost—but to make it possible for him to journey to Moscow without the stigma of defeat. It would be difficult to negotiate with the Russians about anything just when, say, the North Vietnamese were entering Hue. At the same time he assumes that he can count, at least temporarily, on a section of the public rallying "in support of the President," as it usually does in a time of national crisis. So he is willing to accept the risks because, as he sees it, he has run out of options. But what if the Russians elect not to stage a direct confrontation? What will the next escalation be? A landing of some kind in the North? A threat to use nuclear weapons (as Dulles once threatened the Chinese through the Indian ambassador?) Or the actual use of tactical nuclear weapons?

Bemused by 19th-century notions of power, Kissinger believes that if preponderant power is escalated, a step at a time, and if the "carrot" is seemingly sweetened a bit at each escalation, the enemy must eventually do the bidding of those who turn the screws. It was Metternich's notion that, in the end, "things" (power) are more important than people. But that, too, is a false definition. Ronald Sampson reminds us that the British Empire began with the plantation in Ulster in 1609. But the trouble in Ireland has not yet ended nor will it until the British quit deceiving themselves about the Irish. General de Gaulle tried to hammer this point home to President Kennedy about Vietnam but without success. In *Memoirs of Hope*, he quotes himself as having said to Kennedy: "You will find that intervention in this area will be an endless entanglement. Once a nation has been aroused, no foreign power, however strong, can impose its will upon it."

Kissinger's strategy of escalation also assumes that the way to win in the nuclear poker game is to raise the ante, at the right time, in such a way as to force the opponent to make the hard decision of acquiescing in the ultimatum (the bid for power) or of staging a counter-escalation. But suppose the other party elects to do nothing for the time being? Suppose the Russians and the Chinese believe (and in this they would be supported by CIA and other "evaluations") that mining the harbors of North Vietnam and bombing the rail links to China will be as ineffective as Vietnamization in solving America's dilemma? No one pretends that the recent actions can have any short-term effect on the war, and substantial expert opinion on logistics believes that the long-term effect will also fall short of the goal. Mr. Nixon, then, will have "spent" one of his few remaining options to no avail, and will be faced with the need to employ some still more dangerous escalation. It is a progress from unjustified aggression to complete outlawry.

There were, to be sure, some new elements in the offer which the President tried to bury beneath the bluster and arrogance of his address, but the North Vietnamese are not likely to take the bait. So then what? He could try to take the entire issue to the Security Council, but he won't. There is, of course, the possibility of a coup in Saigon. Thieu's declaration of martial law is evidence that he senses the danger. If the present regime were tossed out, the successor regime would not need to be called a "coalition" government even if it were that in fact.

In the meantime, the war continues, the number of POWs is increasing, the destruction is mounting and so are the casualties, and Nixon's Vietnamization policy is in tatters. Why, then, doesn't the President show real concern for the American honor about which he talks so much? Why doesn't he follow the examples of Mendès-France and de Gaulle, who saved French honor by bowing out of Indochina and Algiers? The answer, in brief, is that they were not self-deceived, whereas the President has so entrapped himself in a weight of dogmas, promises, affirmations, threats, declarations and false definitions that he is incapable—psychologically, morally, intellectually, politically—of facing the reality of defeat.

CAMPAIGN '72
A Potpourri of Items

The voting in West Virginia and Nebraska went about as expected, but note that the strong showing of John D. Rockefeller 4th, who won the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, is a good omen for the future of the party in West Virginia. The failure of Terry Sanford, president of Duke University, to succeed in North Carolina was

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primarily the result of Rep. Shirley Chisholm's unfortunate intervention and the characteristic behavior of the well-heeled section of the white middle class, which voted for Wallace to make trouble for the Democrats. In many precincts and communities the vote for Wallace was not "Populist" but reflected the tactics of so-called "Presidential Republicans," who register Democratic merely to have a say in local and state elections. By ignoring the "Bond strategy"—of encouraging blacks to run for local office but to refrain from diversionary efforts in Presidential primaries—Mrs. Chisholm made it impossible for Sanford to get his normal share of the black vote. But Mr. Sanford, who will have some delegates at Miami, remains a fine resource for the Democratic Party.

In Texas, the Johnson-Connally dynasty was shaken if not toppled. Lieut. Gov. Ben Barnes, its handpicked, carefully groomed and elaborately financed candidate for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, lost out to Dolph Briscoe and Frances ("Sissy") Farenthold, who face a runoff election on June 3. Barnes was politically if not personally involved in recent Texas scandals but, more important, the four contenders—Barnes, Farenthold, Briscoe and Smith—split the vote and John Connally's recent defection to the Nixon Administration had annoyed many loyal Texas Democrats.

At this writing, it seems that former Sen. Ralph Yarborough faces a runoff with "Barefoot" Sanders, the dynasty's man, for the Democratic Senatorial nomination. The outcome of this runoff will have an uncertain effect on Mrs. Farenthold's chances. On the one hand, it will bring out a large "hate Yarborough" vote, much of which will be against Sissy. But a large general turnout could mean that she would get the votes of many women who will vote against Yarborough. If nominated, Yarborough stands a good chance to defeat Sen. John Tower. Briscoe, who now opposes Mrs. Farenthold, agrees with the dynasty on most issues but is not their man; his image is that of an independent conservative.

In times past the dynasty's ploy has been to send a nominally uncommitted but tightly controlled delegation to the Democratic convention. This year for the first time in recent years—and largely thanks to the new rules—the delegation will be split among Humphrey, McGovern and Wallace (the actual count will not be determined until the next round in the delegate selection process).

* * *

President Nixon is almost universally regarded as the slickest of politicians, but three recent actions make one question his political astuteness. Most commentators were reluctant to characterize the Administration's recent talk about antitrust action against the networks as a further attempt at intimidation; it seemed too obvious. So, giving the Administration the benefit of the doubt, the talk was interpreted as an attempt to offset the adverse effects of the settlement of the ITT antitrust litigation. But then—as though to remove any doubt about the motivation—Patrick Buchanan, the President's speech writer, not merely attacked the networks as biased in their treatment of the Administration but went on to say that something might have to be done "in the area of antitrust-type action." In other words, Buchanan confirmed the original suggestion that the talk of an antitrust proceeding was, indeed, in-

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tended to intimidate the networks. Buchanan, one may be sure, spoke for the President. This is a bit too crude and obvious to pass as clever politics.

Or take the President's whorish letter to Cardinal Cooke, in which he went out of his way to associate himself with the Cardinal on a state issue and, at the same time, to give the back of his hand to the recommendations of his own Commission on Population Growth, not merely on abortion but also on the dissemination of birth control information. This indefensible intervention—which was not solicited—no doubt had an influence on the New York Assembly which has voted 79 to 68 for repeal of the state's liberal abortion law. In his letter, the President expressed himself as deeply concerned about the sanctity of human life (the slaughter of innocents in Vietnam apparently falls under another heading). The report of the twenty-four-member Commission on Population Growth (chaired by John D. Rockefeller 3rd) was two years in preparation. It has now met the same fate as did the reports of Presidential commissions on pornography, student unrest, and the use of marijuana and other drugs. Governor Rockefeller, who has been trying to fight off the abortion repeal agitation by offering amendments to the existing legislation, could hardly have been elated over the President's action. And since the Governor must now recognize that he is not going to be tapped for the Vice Presidency, it may be that the Nixon campaign in New York will fail to benefit from the President's latest caper. Moreover, on balance, it is to be doubted that more New York residents favor repeal of the state's liberalized abortion law than support it. The President no doubt thought his letter to the Cardinal was devilishly clever politics, but was it?

Then, of course, there is the matter of the visit to John Connally's elegant spread, the Picosa ranch, near Floresville, Tex. [see article, p. 646]. The color in the photographs was exquisite and it was, by all accounts, quite a hoedown, with steaks, drinks, sweet corn and mariachi players. A procession of executive jets kept putting down at the ranch's 4,100-foot landing field, unloading millionaires and their ladies, like squadrons of U. S. fighter planes landing at a "secret" air base in Thailand. The fat cats of Texas were there assembled and the President told them exactly what they wanted to hear: the war would continue and so would their oil depletion allowances.

I venture the prediction that the affair at the Picosa ranch will find a permanent niche in the social history of the Nixon Administration. The symbolism of the tableau was perfect. It demonstrated, dramatized and underscored the relationship between the President and the guests who, it might be said, constitute his favorite constituency. But was it good politics to dramatize, so conspicuously and with such fanfare, a relationship about which one might think the less said the better? Of the comments, what Rep. Charles Vanik (D., Ohio) had to say was most apt: "It was the average taxpayer who was barbecued at the Connally ranch. Like the famous Appalachin conference of November 14, 1957 [a meeting of Mafia types] the guest list was kept secret [it was later released]. . . . There can never be tax reform in America as long as the fat cats are protected and pampered by the President of the United States." Representative Vanik is right, and that is why the conference at Secretary Connally's ranch deserves to rank with the Appalachin conference as a most revealing episode in the history of plunder in modern-day America.

CAREY MCWILLIAMS

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What Did They Expect?

To a man, the American Right supported the escalation of the Vietnamese War by the United States, and only now are some of its members beginning to express doubt. What happened? they ask. Was it a failure of our intelligence services? Did our own people misinform us? Although he may not welcome it, one must feel some compassion for William Buckley, who ascribes the debacle to a monumental failure of intelligence and is trying to decide whom to blame. He is going about his task clinically, he explains, "without prejudice to any future right to give way to anger."

He suggests that maybe we should fire a few generals, or even chastise the Commander in Chief in some unspecified way. Nobody seems terrified and—just a friendly suggestion—a commentator in his position should scrutinize himself before he looks for other outlets for his wrath. He really shouldn't be all that surprised.

The causes of failure are not difficult to discern. An American officer in Vietnam remarked that troops are everywhere much the same. If the officers are contemptible (in a military sense; they may be good to their wives and children) the men are not going to fight to the bitter end. The generals whom Thieu blamed for the defeats in the northern military region are probably typical of the officer corps as a whole. Many of the generals, colonels and other grades fought on the side of the French against their own countrymen, and they are behaving now as they behaved then. An American observer told Craig R. Whitney of *The New York Times*, "These generals are a class apart from the ordinary people of Vietnam. They send their children to French schools, often to Paris, and they are in a sense alienated from their own people."

That is putting it mildly, and the company-grade officers are not likely to be any better than the generals. A CBS television shot shows an ARVN lieutenant screaming at a member of his platoon for not tucking in his shirt or some such misdemeanor, kicking the man in the buttocks and slapping his face—all on camera. The man has to take it; the lieutenant has a revolver in his hand. But if, in battle, that soldier and his comrades don't shoot the lieutenant in the back, they are showing more forbearance than some privates showed in the more respectable armies of the two World Wars.

Other TV shots border on the incredible—but this isn't

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iction. A British TV camera crew picked up scenes of wounded South Vietnamese troops left to die on a macadam highway, the hot tar sticking to their wounds. Lorries whiz by them carrying officers to the rear. The well-mannered British narrator expressed his sense of shock at an army that would so callously abandon its wounded.

The weakness of the ARVN stems from the fact that for years the Americans bore the brunt of the fighting and took a large share of the losses. The ARVN was a kind of freshman team preparing to become the varsity; at least such was the American view. But, for reasons that, however obvious, neither the American trainers nor the American Right could understand, this freshman team never wanted to rise to varsity status. This, after all, was not football but something exceedingly lethal, even with American air power in support.

The North Vietnamese, in contrast, are for the most part dedicated, disciplined soldiers. No disaffected army could fight as theirs does. That, among other facts, gives the lie to Mr. Nixon's contention that the Thieu dictatorship is fighting on behalf of 17 million South Vietnamese. Most of the 17 million, including those in the ARVN and auxiliary forces, want nothing but peace.

Still larger issues, with broader reference, were pointed out years ago by W. Macmahon Ball, the former Australian ambassador who was at the time a contributing editor of *The Nation*. He was the author of a book about nationalism and communism in Southeast Asia. Nationalism, Ball wrote, was a potential counterweight against communism. But in Vietnam we did not back the nationalists, we backed the puppets. Quite unwittingly, we engineered the fusion of nationalism and communism. Our leaders were, and still are, ignorant, self-confident men who have led us into disaster. The American Right, which allied itself eagerly with the rightist factions in the countries of Indochina, was prominent in that leadership. Why they are puzzled now is a puzzle in itself.

Timely Splashdown

Almost at the moment that the crew of Apollo 16 came down in the Pacific with 245 pounds of rocks from the moon, the House began consideration of NASA's budget. The timing was superb, because for eleven days the crew had been dominating, to a large extent, important segments of network time. [See article p. 647.]

This year the NASA budget has been billed as "minimal," but how does one define frugal spending for an agency as open-ended as NASA? In 1969 the President appointed a task force to evaluate what the nation should spend to explore and exploit space. The space savants reported that the minimum for fiscal 1973 should be $4.25 billion. In 1976 the minimum would rise to $5.5 billion and remain at that figure for the balance of the decade.

These levels having been established, NASA's request for $3.379 billion seemed dangerously debilitating, and the Committee on Science and Astronautics sweetened it by $49.95 million. Rep. Delbert L. Latta (R., Ohio) asked "whether we have not enough moon rocks by this time," and suggested that we start "cutting back on these flights and using some of this money for needed projects here on earth." He was voted down 349 to 2, with eighty-two abstentions. The two nays were cast by those chronic dissidents, Dow and Ryan of New York.

The question which was not answered was how one determines a "minimum" for space when we have not sorted out our general priorities. Spending for space seems to be artificially insulated from other considerations: we *must* assign X dollars to space—presumably to keep the organization intact with some 28,000 permanent positions, including 228 public relations people.

A proposal to do something about NASA's segregated facilities in Johannesburg was beaten down on a voice vote. Rep. Charles B. Rangel (D., N.Y.) demanded tellers and suffered another rejection. The tracking station at Johannesburg enhances the safety of the astronauts; the safety and well-being of millions of blacks are of less account.

Congress is hooked on NASA not only because a powerful lobby supports it and a battalion of flacks burnish its image but because Senators and Representatives lack the expertise to question, analyze and evaluate its projects. When they want information they turn to NASA's staff. Rep. Les Aspin (D., Wis.) wanted to get the National Academy of Sciences to survey the entire NASA budget and prepare "an analysis of whether and in what ways the expenditure of an equivalent amount for housing, education, mass transportation and similar purposes might produce a larger or smaller net benefit to the nation." That idea likewise got nowhere.

Part of the problem is the public relations use of space spectaculars by NASA and the Nixon Administration. Apollo 16, in particular, served Mr. Nixon well, if coincidentally, by diverting a considerable measure of attention from the precarious situation in Vietnam.

The Right Decision

At the 30th annual convention of the League of Women Voters, in Atlanta, a small fraction of the 1,500 delegates proposed to give men membership rights. On the final day, a solid majority of the ladies turned the motion down.

Earlier in the week Gloria Steinem, the women's liberationist, had spoken against the proposal. "The truth is," she said, "we are not ready. We cannot integrate with men on an equal basis until we are equal."

We admire Ms. Steinem and agree with her stand, though not with her reason. The League is one of the most useful national and local civic organizations in this country. It has earned applause not once, but many times, for its incisive research on issues, its objective point of view, its courage and its candor. It has been an excellent postgraduate school in politics and public affairs for thousands of women, and it has achieved all this because it has kept men out.

Not every exclusion is to be condemned. Occasionally it has a sound basis and this is one such situation. In fact, often we make too much of "discrimination" in cases where people prefer to do their own thing, in their own way, and by so doing can be most effective.

We hope the League flourishes for a long, long time—even after women are "ready." The members of the League have been "ready" for years, as the husband of any woman who is a member will be glad to testify.

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CHAMPAGNE WITH CONNALLY

THE FAT-CAT BARBECUE

WILLIAM K. WYANT, Jr.
Mr. Wyant is a Washington correspondent for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

San Antonio, Tex.

President Nixon found a warm and friendly audience for his stand on Vietnam and his views on social and economic issues when he and Mrs. Nixon attended a barbecue at Treasury Secretary John B. Connally's Picosa ranch south of here, on the last Sunday in April. The guest list of less than 200 included some of the most wealthy and influential people in the Lone Star State—oil men, ranchers, industrialists, corporation lawyers, insurance moguls, newspaper publishers, bankers and others. Democrats outnumbered Republicans 9 to 1, it was estimated, but the President seemed to feel at home.

Not everywhere in the United States, in these uncertain times, could the President expect to be toasted in champagne for his courage after explaining his rationale for using American air and naval power to prevent a Communist take-over in South Vietnam. He made it clear that the United States, as far as he is concerned, is not going to take a whipping. When he was President, Lyndon B. Johnson—who had been invited to the Connally barbecue but was ailing and remained at his own LBJ ranch not far distant—used to vow that we Americans were not going to "tuck our tails and run." In Texas, which remains a stronghold of old-fashioned patriotism, that goes without saying.

"May we raise our glasses and pay tribute to the courage of the President of the United States," proposed one of the Texans after Mr. Nixon had talked for a while of his resolve to stand firm in Vietnam. Mr. Nixon said he was most grateful for the toast and, incidentally, that he hoped the champagne would hold out for the evening.

"But," he added at that point, "I do want to say that in the final analysis what is really on the line here, of course, is the position of the United States of America as the strongest free world power, as a constructive force for peace in the world."

On the previous Wednesday night, before flying to Key Biscayne in Florida for a long weekend, President Nixon had gone on television and delivered a formal, set piece on Vietnam. What he said about Vietnam in Texas was a repetition of the same themes, without a prepared text. It was a rambling, informal discourse in response to amiable, sympathetic, encouraging questions from Connally's high-powered guests. Mr. Nixon handled the occasion well, and he included some revealing variations and grace notes that added to the carefully orchestrated Wednesday address to the nation.

A questioner asked whether President Nixon thought the American people were losing confidence in themselves. In replying, Mr. Nixon termed it "nonsense" to believe that all troubles will disappear once the war in Vietnam is over. "Let us well understand," he said in a key passage, "if the United States, as a great nation, fails in Vietnam as we come to the end of this long road—and as we see the end, and as we know that it is not necessary to fail—I can think of nothing that would destroy the confidence of the American people more than that."

Mr. Nixon had a great deal to say about the ill consequences to the South Vietnamese, to the United States and to the world at large if he simply called it quits and pulled out. He spoke of diminished "respect" for the office of the President and a blood bath in South Vietnam. It is the President's political judgment, if the paragraph quoted above means anything at all, that although the American people want to end their involvement in Vietnam, they would not accept ignominious defeat and they would not reward leaders who engineered that kind of denouement.

It was a memorable outpouring of the spirit, that Sunday visit of the President with the Texas movers and shakers who are the friends of his Democratic Secretary of the Treasury. Connally assembled the giants for him and he told them what they wanted to hear about oil depletion as well as Vietnam. He lost Texas to Hubert H. Humphrey in 1968 and wants very much to carry it this year, but there is no evidence that Mr. Nixon needed to tailor his views to suit the audience. Will the camaraderie under the live oaks outside Connally's handsome ranch house lead to a "Texas Democrats for Nixon" movement, comparable to the one generated for Dwight D. Eisenhower? Perhaps so. The Texas AFL-CIO had warned politicians running in the state's Democratic primary to stay away from the ranch, and they stayed away.

For newsmen accompanying the President, the extended, Texas-oriented "State of the Union" message was an unexpected dividend after three tranquil days among the Florida palms. The President and Mrs. Nixon had arrived at Randolph Air Force Base near San Antonio in the later part of Sunday afternoon. Looking tanned and relaxed, Mr. Nixon shook hands with some people along the fence at Randolph—presumably mostly Air Force personnel and their dependents. The band played Scottish airs. The President had nothing to say publicly at that point. He and Mrs. Nixon went by helicopter directly to the ranch.

White House press busses took newsmen and photographers to the stately St. Anthony's Hotel in San Antonio, where a pressroom had been set up. Then the press was bussed to the Picosa ranch for cocktails with other guests on the front lawn. The countryside looked poor along part of the route, but as one neared the ranch it was lush and green, reflecting what money and good husbandry can do in Texas. Approaching the ranch house, the press busses halted briefly while a private aircraft landed on the Connally strip. Already landed and drawn up were fourteen other aircraft that had brought guests from various parts of the state. In nearby pastures grazed fat red cattle and a few horses.

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The oak trees were hung with baskets of chrysanthemums; floral displays floated in the swimming pool. There was an outside bar and a white-and-yellow tent for the barbecue supper. Friendly Texans were talking and shaking hands. Their ladies were giving one another *abrazos*. A mild breeze stirred through the trees. After a while, Mr. Nixon and the First Lady emerged from the ranch house, where they were to remain overnight, and mingled with the guests. The President said that, for the first time, he was seeing Texas the way Texas should be. It had a certain ambience, that party. One thought of the golden opening chapters of *Gone With the Wind*.

After what is called "photo opportunity," newsmen and photographers climbed back aboard the busses and left the ranch, leaving a small "pool" to cover the dinner. At that time, there was no indication that Mr. Nixon would have anything of consequence to say. It was much later in the evening, after reporters got back to San Antonio, that pool accounts of the question-and-answer period began coming in. The efficient White House press staff quickly ground out a verbatim transcript, page by page. It ran nearly 19 pages double-spaced, adding up to a campaign document that will be chewed over, by friends and foes of Mr. Nixon, for some time to come. □

THE LUNAR PITCH

NASA'S PIE IN THE SKY

MARK BLOOM
Mr. Bloom, formerly science editor for the New York Daily News *and aerospace editor for Reuters, is now writing about scientific developments on a free-lance basis.*

It frequently occurs to those who take note of Americans walking on the moon that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration times its Apollo missions as a cover-up for some particularly insidious Administration activity. That is not so. Apollo missions are planned many months ahead (Apollo 17 goes next December 6), and launch day is geared to the sun's angle on the planned lunar landing site. However, the White House is aware many months ahead of the planned launch date, and if it wishes to take advantage of Apollo publicity to cover up some dubious exploit, it's not NASA's fault. NASA is used to it. After all, the first alibi for Francis Gary Powers' U-2 mission was that it was a NASA weather plane off course.

To be sure, NASA is not always aloof from politics. For instance, NASA appears to be succumbing to pressures from Congress and the White House to "sell the space program" to the American public. John Donnelly, once described as "the only Republican ever to graduate from Long Island University," equivocates on whether NASA plans to "sell," "educate," or "inform." Appointed last July as NASA's assistant administrator for public affairs, Donnelly admits that "we are subject to criticism [from friends in Congress] for not selling the space story adequately."

Donnelly's predecessor was Julian Scheer, appointed under former NASA administrator, James Webb, late in the Kennedy administration. Scheer departed NASA a year ago after building and shaping the most unusual and extensive information program in the history of government. "When everything was great, public affairs were ignored by Congress," says Scheer. "They [the space committees] didn't bother with us. But when interest in the space program began to tail off, the interesting thing was that our committees thought that we should be spending more money, and selling the space program to the American public. In other words, they wanted us to become an advertising agency instead of a news operation. This was quite a revelation. They would have given us any amount of money to become an ad agency. There was that conflict in the end between my desire to run a news operation and their desire to have the space program sold to the American people, and that's what they really wanted to do. That was the final clash I had, a philosophical clash in the end."

Donnelly's view of how public affairs should operate is a little less clear-cut. Asked if he saw it as a public relations or a public information job, he replied: "I think it's a public relations operation, but I don't mean that in a pejorative sense. I wouldn't have said it if I did. There is a fine line between selling and informing. If the product is good, good information can sell."

In a subsequent interview, Donnelly tried to clear up what he meant. "I don't feel that marketing, and quotes around that word, is the responsibility of the public affairs department. I do believe, however, that if you do have a good product that a good information program can be an effective means of persuasion, and I like to think that NASA does have a good product. We like to think that the agency's interest and the public's interest are one and the same. If NASA is, as we believe, a forward-driving force, then through an education program to make people more fully aware of what we believe are the benefits of the program, we'll derive more support for the program."

There was that one line: "We like to think that the agency's interest and the public's interest are one and the same." It recalled something about what was good for General Motors. It also suggested the specter—though certainly less hazardous—of a two-headed monster like the Atomic Energy Commission, which has played the mutually inconsistent roles of sole regulator and chief promoter of the nation's nuclear power programs.

The worst thing about NASA trying to "sell the space story" is that so much naive, hero-worshipping, gee-whiz pap has already been fed to the nation about the space program, even with NASA holding back. Donnelly is absolutely right when he contends, "We have mostly told the hows up till now—we must change the emphasis to the whys." Unfortunately, an honest assessment of why

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there is a space program, if it stuck only to scientific objectives, would be tough to sell. The bonanza-from-looking-back-at-earth explanation has already been oversold, though it may be valid some day. And it isn't enough to say that we must keep engineers employed in Long Island, Southern California and Seattle. Until man goes to Mars, the adventure of it all will steadily reduce. Sputnik no longer panics anyone.

Typical of the rubbish one sees written about the civilian space program was an article in *U.S. News & World Report* of May 8 about the upcoming Skylab series of three manned flights to be in earth orbit in 1973; they are the final American manned flights thus far funded. The story was datelined Huntington Beach, Calif., so one must assume that a good deal of the pap came from the public relations men at McDonnell-Douglas there. McDonnell-Douglas makes the Skylab, which is actually a specially furbished third stage of a Saturn 5 rocket. The article described Skylab as a "revolutionary new space platform."

The third paragraph of "Story of Skylab" reads as follows: "Skylab will cost one-tenth the $25 billion spent on the Apollo moon program, but many spacemen say it may return far more in practical results. Day-to-day living on earth could be altered by the new program."

It's that old oversell, the great bonanza from space. Just give us a Skylab and life is but a dream. Remember how those weather satellites were going to let you plan a picnic two weeks in advance? Where to begin on "Story of Skylab" paragraph three? Yes, Skylab is estimated at $2.5 billion, but shouldn't one remember that without the $25 billion for Apollo, there would be no Skylab? The spacecraft is the third stage of a Saturn moon rocket, and the Apollo command ship will be the ferry to take astronauts back and forth between Skylab and earth. Yes, Skylab may return more in practical benefits, but the Apollo moon landings were not designed for immediate returns. They were designed to study the moon, kill off that old green cheese theory, bring knowledge to mankind. At least that's the way they were designed in the latter stages of development; originally Apollo was simply a project to beat the Russians at something spectacular. Furthermore, the only "practical result" experiment scheduled for Skylab that could not be done by less expensive unmanned craft is one involving ball bearings. The other experiment needing men, other than using them as medical guinea pigs, is an astronomy study that promises no practical return. Changing the quality of day-to-day life involves earth monitoring, which could be carried out with unmanned ships.

The "Story of Skylab" ran at that level of sophistication for 2 pages. It did not even suggest that Skylab (formerly called the S4B workshop of the Apollo Applications Program) was originally no more than a test vehicle for a big, twelve-man space laboratory that has been killed by budget cuts, and an experimentation tank to see if human beings can withstand fifty-six days of weightlessness. It did not mention the military aspect—that Skylab will take American astronauts over the Soviet Union for the first time. It was totally uncritical; it was, in short, a public relations man's dream.

One must give Donnelly the benefit of the doubt, and assume that he was not thinking of such articles as the "Story of Skylab" when he spoke of informing the public. In fact, some long-time NASA public affairs men report that Donnelly has been "a tiger" in protecting a full flow of information about the proposed U.S.-Soviet joint manned space mission, not to mention the full release of information after launch. Dealing with the Russians for the 1975 flight (assuming the diplomats are not scared off by naval blockades) may prove as tough a challenge for NASA public affairs men as was Neil Armstrong's first step on the moon.

Two factors contributed to the role of NASA's public affairs and its enormous, unprecedented information program. One was the historic nature of space travel. Second, and vitally important when one remembers the blow to the nation's confidence from Sputnik 1, was the desire to show the sharpest possible contrast between the "secret" Soviet space program and the "open" American program. The "free world's" first satellite was launched in view of television cameras for the hearts and minds of all the world to absorb. Though it blew up (it was a Navy project, undertaken a year before NASA was formed in 1958), at least it blew up in public. Publicity gained from having an open program was considered to be of incalculable value in counteracting the seemingly endless series of Russian "space firsts." Actually, by today's standards, NASA, in its early days, was almost as close-mouthed as the Russians have always been. It is rarely recalled today, but when NASA was set to launch its first man into space, his name was withheld right up to the morning of launch. All NASA would say was that it was either Alan Shepard, Virgil Grissom or John Glenn. The man best suited for the job—a fifteen-minute suborbital flight—would be picked three hours before launch, and his name released after blast-off. We know now it was all lies: Shepard had been selected two months before the flight, but NASA management feared he would be bothered too much if his name were released, and public affairs went right along.

There were troubles in the countdown that morning in 1961, and the launch had to be postponed. But by then so many people were in on it that Shepard was officially announced as the free world's first spaceman-to-be. His flight, duplicating one already successfully conducted by a chimpanzee, was flown flawlessly.

NASA didn't have to sell the space program in those days, and didn't try. Space sold itself, and Congress wrote a blank check. The miracles were simply too wondrous to ignore. By 1965, the United States, with its two-week manned flights, and a rendezvous between Geminis 6 and 7, was beginning to overtake the early Russian lead in demonstrated space capability. Close-up Ranger photographs showed the moon's crater-pitted surface as never before, and pictures of Mars came streaming millions of miles back to earth from Mariner 4.

Then, almost on each other's heels, came two jolts that foreshadowed today's state of affairs. First was Gemini 8, the nation's first crisis in space. There was more panic on the ground than in orbit when astronauts Neil Armstrong and David Scott successfully overcame a wildly firing rocket thruster and made an emergency return to earth. None of the space-to-earth conversation was

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played for newsmen until the next day. Livid reporters demanded an explanation, since the astronauts sounded perfectly calm when the tapes were played. There really was no explanation except that NASA officials made a dumb decision, and public affairs could not overrule them. "We learned a lot on Gemini 8," said a high public affairs officer a few weeks ago. "Things really turned around then." Actually they didn't. The program did not become totally open until the Apollo series, and even then it was not until Apollo 13 that newsmen were allowed inside mission control during a flight. The second jolt, more subtle and more significant, was that the novelty of the space program began to wane. It was just another Gemini, going up to rendezvous and dock, and another walk in space for another of the astronauts, whose names were getting harder and harder to remember. Walter Cronkite could remember them, but how many others?

At this point, just a hint of selling came from a high NASA official, George Mueller, then associate administrator for manned flight. He began talking about Americans on Mars by 1985. It did not go down well, and Mueller looked back at the moon. And when Gemini ended, the moon was what it was all about. Then NASA was hit by the worst jolt of all—the Apollo 1 fire which killed three astronauts on the launching pad at Cape Kennedy.

"We simply were not prepared for that," a NASA public affairs officer related the other day. "It happened early Friday evening—the worst possible time. We couldn't find anyone. We didn't know what to do."

Since then, NASA public affairs has resolved never to be caught without a tragedy plan. There exists a 36-page internal document called the Apollo Program Contingency Plan, which gets a 6-page assignment update for each mission. Copies go to Mr. Ziegler at the White House, Mr. Henkin at the Pentagon, Mr. McCloskey at the State Department. It contains suggested statements, with blanks for names, to be made in case of crew fatalities, by the President, the Vice President, the NASA administrator and the Secretary of Defense. It also includes statements to be issued if the explosion of a Saturn 5 produced a nuclear contamination hazard. The contamination, highly unlikely, would come from the rupture of a tank holding nuclear fuel to be taken to the moon to power the scientific instruments left there.

The booklet also says, referring to an emergency in space during which the crew's condition is in doubt: "Mission commentary, including air-to-ground, will continue. The commentator will describe the situation as it is understood. He will relate in as great detail as is feasible actions under way to correct the problem or acquire additional information." Announcements of death or serious injury would be withheld until families were informed, but in no case for more than twenty minutes.

That plan was in effect on Apollo 13, when it appeared for a while that the three astronauts would be unable to make it back to earth alive. From the standpoint of NASA public affairs, it was the agency's finest hour. Nothing was held back.

Apollo 1 had been different. Not only was virtually everything held back; what was released was garbled and confused. After that, and for the first time since the agency had been formed, both Congressional space committees began doing their jobs. Since then, they have slipped back to the old protective role. NASA's existence and the Apollo project for a time hung in the balance. NASA survived, though almost in spite of itself, but things have never been quite the same. In recent years, the budget has slipped 40 per cent and public interest in space—except during the time of the Apollo 8 Christmas Eve lunar orbit, and the Apollo 11 moon landing—has been lackadaisical. Perhaps it would have happened anyway, but the decline began with the fire.

Now NASA, that burgeoning young agency which was always "go," has apparently got to go out and sell itself like an aging starlet. If it can keep Congressional enemies from killing the shuttle, NASA can probably survive indefinitely. And just as in 1957, when the Russians really put the United States in the space business with the beep-beep-beep of Sputnik 1, the Russians are helping again. The novelty of astronauts and cosmonauts flying together in space should keep the public happy at least through the middle of the decade; international space cooperation would be as tough to fight as Mother's Day.

So, John Donnelly may not have to "sell," "educate," or "inform" as hard as he thinks. He just needs to keep the Russians coming. □

Irish Blood & English Tribunals

ANDREW BOYD
Mr. Boyd, a frequent contributor, is the author of Holy War in Belfast, *which has just been published here by Grove Press. His most recent book is* The Rise of the Irish Trade Unions, 1729-1970, *issued by Anvil Books, Dublin.*

Sir Leslie Scarman, an English judge, and Sir John Widgery, Lord Chief Justice of England, have added their names to those of the many tribunals and commissions that, over the last century and more, have inquired into communal disturbances in Northern Ireland. The earlier inquiries, from which the British seem to have learned nothing, go back to the 1830s, when a Parliamentary commission investigated the activities, oaths, forms of organization, and ritual of the exclusively Protestant and anti-Catholic Orange Institution. The report of that commission was unfavorable to Orangeism, and influenced Parliament to pass the Party Processions Act which banned all political processions in Ireland, especially the Orange marches, for nearly forty years. The ban on processions was lifted temporarily in the 1840s, but reimposed in 1849 when a fearful sectarian riot at Dolly's Brae in County Down

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caused the deaths of many people and the destruction of numerous houses and buildings. The Party Processions Act was not finally repealed until 1871.

In the 100 years since then processions in the North of Ireland have so increased in numbers and frequency that today they are almost sacred. It is enough for the Orangemen to say that a procession is "traditional" for it to be allowed to proceed, whatever the consequences. At the same time, the Orangemen and the politicians of the Unionist Party try to stop processions of their opponents on the Catholic side. Indeed, if there is one curse in Ulster's political life it is processions. To allow them to be carried on is dangerous and provocative; to ban them is to invite violent reaction.

The Civil Rights march in Derry on October 5, 1968, which William Craig, Stormont's Minister of Home Affairs, tried to stop by armored police, will be remembered in history as one of the major events in Northern Ireland's present crisis. The march of Apprentice Boys, a Protestant organization, in Derry on August 12, 1969, was the event that raised the crisis to the level of armed conflict. In 1970, Robert Porter, who became Minister of Home Affairs after Craig was dismissed, told the Northern Ireland Parliament that the Orange Order and similar Prot-

Irish Independent, Dublin

estant organizations held 1,342 major and minor parades every year. Some parades took place for the most insignificant reasons. Many of them were organized for no purpose other than to annoy and provoke the Catholics.

Scarman's report refers to an Orange parade that halted at the Unity Flats, a Catholic enclave in the center of Belfast, in the early hours of the morning of July 13, 1969, to play party political music and express hostility. The report adds that "some of the residents of the flats were disturbed by the noise and they complained to the police who were accompanying the band. One witness asserted that the police told some residents that if they did not like it they could go South" (i.e., into the Republic of Ireland).

"There is no doubt," continues the report, "that a number of residents were angered by having their sleep disturbed by the noisy playing of what they called provocative tunes. But it was not suggested that July 12, 1969 was in any way different from previous years, since it appears to have been the practice for loosely organized bands to parade around the city in the early hours."

But 1969 *was* different. A number of explosives and acts of sabotage, which Scarman decided were the work of Protestant extremists, had taken place in the early summer. The purpose of this terror was to overthrow Terence O'Neill, who was then Stormont's Prime Minister, and to secure the release from prison of the Protestant leaders, Ian Paisley and Ronald Bunting.

The sabotage succeeded. O'Neill resigned, and his successor, James Chichester-Clark, released Paisley and Bunting under a general amnesty for all political offenders. At the time, however, the campaign of terror was publicly blamed, not on the militant Protestants but on the Irish Republican Army. Anthony Peacock, chief of the Ulster police, asserted that the IRA was responsible. A few months later, when the violence in Derry and elsewhere forced the British Government to intervene, Peacock resigned. He has since gone to live in England, but when questioned by the Scarman tribunal he was too ill to remember clearly the events of 1969.

Scarman's brief was to inquire into the violence and civil disturbances of that year. The disturbances included the Protestant sabotage, a number of incidents which caused weekend mob fights between Catholics and Protestants in certain working-class districts of Belfast, and the violence which arose out of provocative Orange marches. These events culminated in the Apprentice Boys march in Derry, the rising of the Bogside against the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and simultaneous outbreaks of violence in Belfast, Armagh, Dungannon, Coalisland and elsewhere in Northern Ireland.

In Belfast, the Catholics were convinced that Protestant militants supported by the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the exclusively Protestant Ulster special constabulary (B Specials) had mounted a campaign of terror and destruction against them. The RUC, which was equipped with heavily armored vehicles known as Shorlands and high-velocity weapons, was more an army of repression than a police force. Yet it lacked the firm discipline and training of an army. Both the RUC and the USC had been the object of Catholic hatred and fear since the foundation of Northern Ireland in 1920.

Those Catholics who appeared as witnesses before the Scarman tribunal accused the police of deliberate murder, especially in the case of Patrick Rooney, a child shot dead by fire from a Shorland on August 15, 1969, and in the case of John Gallagher whom the B Specials killed during a riot in Armagh. After carefully considering all the evidence about the death of Patrick Rooney, the Scarman tribunal concluded that, despite denials by members of the RUC, at least one of the Shorlands had opened fire on

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the block of flats where the child had lived. The tribunal was unable to understand how the police could justify firing their powerful weapons into the dwellings. They implied that the policemen's denials were plain lies.

The tribunal suspected similar lies from members of the special constabulary, who were present in Armagh and who killed John Gallagher and wounded two other men. Gallagher was one of a crowd that had gathered but which apparently was not violent. Scarman was unable to identify the special constable whose bullet killed Gallagher, but he had no doubt, first, that one of the Specials was responsible and, second, that "there was no justification for firing into the crowd."

While the Scarman report undoubtedly indicts the Protestant militants, the RUC, and the special constabulary, it also lays blame on the Northern Ireland Civil Rights movement for spreading the disturbances in August 1969 to other parts of Northern Ireland once they had started in Derry. The tribunal saw this spreading of the trouble as part of a plan to relieve pressure on Derry where, as a consequence of the march of Apprentice Boys, the people had become involved in bloody conflict with the police. The police, for their part, believed they were faced with an armed uprising against the Stormont government. They killed several people, but they were not able, according to Scarman, to prevent the burning of factories by Catholics or the destruction of dwellings by Protestant mobs.

The Scarman report is fairly detailed in its account of the disturbances, but is now regarded as merely of historic interest because the situation in Northern Ireland is immeasurably worse today than it was in 1969. If Scarman's findings were intended to help Britain find a solution, they cannot be of much value, unless perhaps the tribunal has provided a more confidential report for the British Government's own guidance and information. In 1969 the IRA scarcely existed in Belfast. Since then, even though it has divided into a Marxist "Official" wing and an Irish Liberation "Provisional" wing, the IRA has caused widespread destruction of business premises and factories and has seriously disrupted the economy of Northern Ireland. By its sustained and ruthless campaign of terror it has forced the British to abolish Stormont and impose their own direct rule on Northern Ireland. To the Provisional IRA, at least, the abolition of Stormont is a step toward the reunification of Ireland, but that did not cause its extremists to lessen their campaign of sabotage and terror.

The event that probably did most to hasten direct rule from London was the shooting of thirteen men by British paratroopers during a civil rights demonstration in Derry on January 30—Bloody Sunday, as that day is called even by the British. The causes of the deaths on Bloody Sunday have been the subject of a report by Lord Widgery, who was appointed by Prime Minister Heath to make an inquiry.

The story of Bloody Sunday goes back to early January, when Brian Faulkner, who was then Stormont's Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs, imposed a twelve-month ban on all processions, Orange processions as well as Republican and civil rights processions. The Orangemen resented the ban. They thought it would stop their round of annual marches, which usually begin at Easter and build up through the summer to end in August. The Orange leaders had a meeting with Faulkner, after which they seemed satisfied that their processions would not be unduly restricted. They may even have been told that the civil rights movement and the Catholics were to be the first victims of the ban.

The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association had declared its intention to "return to the streets" even before Faulkner announced the ban. Its first demonstration was to be a march from the Bogside through Derry City on January 30. Faulkner, to uphold his prestige as a tough Unionist, was determined to stop that march, whatever the cost. Nonetheless, Widgery's first conclusion was that there would have been no deaths in Derry "if those who organized the illegal march had not thereby created a highly dangerous situation in which a clash between the demonstrators and the security forces was almost inevitable." At the same time, he admitted that "if the army had persisted in its low-key attitude and had not launched a large-scale operation to arrest hooligans, the day might have passed off without serious incident." Who ordered the army to abandon its low-key strategy? That vital question Lord Widgery does not answer.

The Catholic attitude was that Widgery should never have been asked to conduct the inquiry. They did not see how he, a former Brigadier General, could indict British soldiery of slaughter or accuse the government in London of ordering the troops to shoot down unarmed civilians who were taking part in a demonstration which, though illegal according to Faulkner's ban, was not violent. In Widgery's view, whoever was responsible for the deaths on Bloody Sunday, it was not the soldiers who fired the fatal shots, even if "some of the firing bordered on the reckless."

Thirteen men were executed on Bloody Sunday and many others seriously wounded, for taking part in an illegal march. Had they been arrested, the most severe penalty they might have received would have been six months in jail. But British paratroopers, acting on the instructions of politicians in Belfast and in London, decreed that the penalty was to be death by shooting.

That the paratroopers had the power to execute people has been borne out by Widgery. Each soldier had a yellow card of instructions about firing on gunmen and other identifiable targets, and each was his own judge of what sort of target he had identified. In other words, any trigger-happy British trooper had the right to fire on anyone and claim afterward that his victim was a gunman or was about to throw a petrol bomb. That is how, for example, Harry Thornton, an inoffensive workman on his way to his job, was killed in Belfast in August 1971. It is how the victims of Bloody Sunday died. Every soldier with his "yellow-card" has been given a license to commit murder.

According to Widgery, none of the people who were shot dead in Derry and none of those who were wounded had been handling firearms or bombs at the time they were killed. He had "a strong suspicion," however, that "some of them had been handling firearms or bombs earlier in the day." The others he wholly acquitted of "complicity in such action." The strong suspicion held by this Lord Chief Justice was based upon unproven, unsubstantiated claims by army witnesses that there had been

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traces of lead on the bodies of the dead. But, as the lawyers for the relatives of the deceased asserted, even if that were so, lead could easily be found on any person who was in the vicinity of gunfire. The army's claim certainly did not seem substantial in the minds of ordinary and reasonable people, yet it was accepted by Widgery. In any case, even if the suspicion had been very strong and backed by convincing evidence, it would not have justified execution.

Widgery has tried his best to exonerate the army, even though some of the officers who appeared at his inquiry admitted that they had lied immediately after the shooting when they told the press and television that the dead men had been carrying guns and that the British had been fired upon by the IRA within the Bogside. The testimony of these officers was accepted and Widgery decided that "there had been no general breakdown in discipline among the troops."

But in his efforts to exonerate and defend the actions of the British soldiers Widgery merely condemns their commanders. His admission that there would have been no deaths had the army maintained its "low-key attitude" is very important, because maintaining low-key operations was precisely the advice that Chief Superintendent Frank Lagan, commander of the Royal Ulster Constabulary in Derry, gave to the authorities a few days before the march was due to take place. Lagan warned that "the dangers of interfering with the march were too great and that no action should be taken save to photograph the leaders with a view to their prosecution later."

That wise and humane advice was overruled not by the army commanders but by what Widgery refers to vaguely as "higher authority." That authority, according to a statement made by Brian Gibbens, Q.C., the lawyer who represented the Ministry of Defense during the inquiry, was the Northern Ireland Security Committee, which was dominated by the Stormont Cabinet and of which Brian Faulkner was chairman. If, therefore, Widgery's inquiry had taken in more than just the events of Sunday, January 30, in Derry and had included an examination of the role of Stormont and Westminster, he might have been able to identify the politicians responsible for the slaughter.

The paratroopers, trained to kill instinctively, were ordered to stop the Derry civil rights march by force of arms. Widgery states that "for the most part the soldiers acted as they did because their orders required it." But while the group of men who pulled the triggers that bloody day are clearly identified in Widgery's report, their masters are not named. And that is what is missing. □

THE TIMID FAA

HOW SAFE ARE THE AIRWAYS?

THOMAS DE BAGGIO
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Washington

They must believe in miracles at the Federal Aviation Administration. This dependence on the Almighty has the advantage of putting the agency closer to the planes and pilots for which it is responsible, and also explains why it is so often found on its knees. It might also explain what others consider the FAA's remarkable luck. For, according to the evidence of secret FAA documents, Congressional committees and airline crews, it is luck, not alertness and vigor, that has saved the nation's guardian of aviation safety from public disgrace.

But visitors to the much ballyhooed international transportation exposition, sponsored by the Transportation Department at Dulles International Airport, will not get a glimpse of the FAA's dogeared prayer books, which have served to protect the nation from air tragedies at least as effectively as have the agency's rules and regulations. What they will see between May 27 and June 4 is the sparkling glory of new technology. Behind its gleaming surface and heady promise is "skulduggery" more extensive than several ITT scandals, according to Philip I. Ryther, former chief of evaluation for the FAA.

Ryther, a graying block of a man with twelve years' experience at the FAA, was appointed in 1969 to lead a special team of agency evaluators. The 29-page document that resulted from their work was so critical and far-reaching that it immediately became a national secret and continues to be so to this day. It calls for the complete overhaul of the FAA. Ryther's persistence on behalf of the report was rewarded with the suggestion that he retire or be fired. He resisted both for nearly nine months and then retired. But FAA influence continued in his life. He wrote a book about his experiences at the agency; it is to be published by Doubleday in July as *Who's Watching the Airways?* Before Ryther had a chance to correct the galley proofs of it, the White House was appealing to the publisher to suppress it, threatening expensive lawsuits if it did not.

Between his retirement and the White House threats, Ryther was scheduled to testify before the Senate Aviation Subcommittee. The subcommittee's staff was so excited by the information he gave them that they asked him to prepare questions for the Senators to ask witnesses, as well as to appear himself. But action at a secret subcommittee session squelched his appearance entirely, and the questions weren't asked.

What the White House, the FAA and Congress have worked together to suppress is only part of the story of the large-scale aviation safety failure, but in itself it is harrowing. Last year, the National Transportation Safety Board estimates, 1,525 individuals were killed in 4,694 plane wrecks. Most of these deaths—1,322—occurred in what

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the FAA refers to as general aviation, the flying done by private pilots. The remainder took place on scheduled and nonscheduled airline flights. In a report last September, the Department of Transportation's assistant secretary for safety and consumer affairs noted that a surprisingly high number of general aviation wrecks occurred on training flights, with the instructor present. Between 1966 and 1969, 19 per cent of the general aviation wrecks were on training flights and one out of every three of them involved instructors as well as student pilots.

More than a year and a half earlier, Ryther had zeroed in on the FAA weakness responsible for this state of affairs with a bluntness characteristic of his evaluation of the agency: "FAA is tolerating an unsafe condition in the area of general aviation pilot training," he warned, adding that it was "a condition which, unless corrected soon, will contribute to a further deterioration of safety." He concluded: "Many general aviation pilots . . . are a menace to themselves and others."

Here are some of the weaknesses pointed out in the Ryther and Transportation Department reports:

¶Basic license requirements have changed little since 1938, but in some instances standards were lowered as flying became more complex.

¶Of the 5,000 flight schools in the country, less than half are FAA-approved. Fewer than 10 per cent of the nation's pilots are trained in approved schools.

¶The FAA cannot stop a flight school from operating, no matter how poor the instruction.

¶Flight instructors are recertified every two years, but the examination does not necessarily include a flight check.

¶Pilot training is inadequate. The initial flight test fails to examine fully the student's ability under emergency or rough-weather conditions.

¶Once a flyer is licensed, he need pass only a medical examination periodically to keep his license, even if he fails to maintain his proficiency.

When the General Accounting Office looked into what limited data was available, its investigators found that roughly 80 per cent of the general aviation crackups were caused by pilot error. The same April 1970 report said that in 1967, 42 per cent of the pilots who wrecked their planes had fifty hours or less flight time. FAA requires only forty hours for a license.

In the face of this serious criticism of pilot training requirements, the FAA began to move. But the agency has yet to reach the jet age and some feel that even horse and buggy speeds may be too fast for its creaky machinery. Ryther noted that it took a full 325 days for the agency to process a simple, noncontroversial rule which required no public hearings. A full two years after Ryther submitted his report, the agency set forth a broad-scale revision of pilot training and certification rules in order to upgrade them. The *Federal Register* notice of March 23 which announced the proposed changes allowed 120 days for comments before closing the docket; that is twice the time most agencies allot for such purposes.

There is no telling when the final rules will become effective—if they ever do. For as Ryther noted, "Proposed rules are dropped because of industry political pressure." And, he elaborated in an interview, the general aviation pilots' lobby, which though little known, is one of the most powerful in Washington. What other group could count between 200 and 300 Congressmen among its membership?

While it was a major point of the Ryther report, his criticism of the agency's failure to require pilot training up to the level of proficiency was not the only fault he found with the FAA's safety record. He discovered that FAA rules were subject to "many different interpretations" and many were not "specific enough to be enforced."

The FAA is responsible for qualifying not only the more than 500,000 pilots in the United States but also the more than 100,000 mechanics who work on the planes. Some 1,400 inspectors are assigned to this job, half of them being spread over the huge general aviation field. Since the vast majority of general aviation wrecks are attributed to "pilot error," Ryther said, "it would then seem appropriate that surveillance of airman training should be placed high on the inspector's list of priorities. However, under present practice he is unable to do this. Approximately 50 per cent of his time is spent in administrative and nonsafety related tasks." He added: "A very small part of his time is spent in assuring that pilots are being adequately trained and properly tested."

Ryther discovered that inspectors were frustrated by the practically nonexistent safety standards for operators of noncertified commercial air carriers which specialize in charter flights. "Qualifications of crews and mechanics employed by many of these operators are marginal," he contended in the report. "Some inspectors have resorted to appealing to the better judgment of 'customers' in attempting to dissuade them from doing business with operators who they feel operate in a potentially hazardous manner." Ryther contends today that had his warnings in this area been heeded immediately ("The administrator could have made the necessary changes with a stroke of the pen") the crash six months later that obliterated the Wichita State football team might have been prevented.

Lack of rigorous training standards for flight personnel on giant airliners has recently been charged by Ralph Nader's Aviation Consumer Action Project, headed by K. G. J. Pillai. In March the group, citing a deterioration in standards, petitioned the FAA to improve recurrent training for flight engineers. In 1967, flight engineers at Pan American received seventy-one hours of ground training yearly, Pillai said. The following year it was reduced to twenty-four hours. The flight engineers' association protested that thirty-five hours was a necessary minimum, but the Air Transport Association, speaking for the nation's scheduled airlines, won the battle. The FAA set a twenty-five hour minimum. In 1970 the FAA capitulated further with approval for Pan American to reduce its training to eighteen hours.

"Flight engineers admit that at least nine accidents that occurred in Pan American's operations since 1968 are clearly attributable to crew failures," Pillai said. "In these accidents hundreds of passengers and crew members were killed or seriously injured. Despite this horrendous loss of human lives, the FAA did not take steps to improve the quality of training for crew members."

The federal government initially became involved in

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aviation in 1926. Under legislation passed that year, the Commerce Department was authorized to "foster" aviation. This meant licensing pilots, certifying the airworthiness of airplanes and monitoring air safety, duties that were performed under the immediate supervision of the Aeronautics branch, which became the Bureau of Air Commerce in 1934. With the passage of the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938, President Franklin Roosevelt reorganized the government's aviation control into two separate units, establishing the framework for the organization as it exists today. A Civil Aeronautics Board was set up to regulate the economic facets of aviation and a Civil Aeronautics Authority continued in the Commerce Department as a pilot licensing and safety agency. The Federal Aviation Act of 1958 brought into being an independent Federal Aviation Agency. In 1967, with a slight adjustment in name, it became part of the new Department of Transportation.

Such a dry accounting of the FAA's growth omits all its pitiful human qualities. That flavor was aptly summed up in a 1970 report by the House Government Operations Committee: "The FAA simply does not move forward," it concluded, and then added mournfully: "All too often in the past, progress has been the result of tragedy."

Like much of the Washington bureaucracy, the FAA is the victim of legislative schizophrenia. It was born of a compromise between the public interest and the aviation industry. The FAA is charged with regulating the industry and at the same time promoting it, and the two duties are incompatible.

Ryther did more than suggest that this was at the core of the FAA's failure. "Too much credence has been placed in the past on that part of the Federal Aviation Act that specifies we should 'foster aviation,' " he wrote. "Many proposed rule changes are met with the hue and cry that they will retard the advancement of aviation. FAA should adopt a strong resolution that any advancement to safety is a definite advancement of aviation."

The House Commerce Committee, in its 1957 report on the legislation which created the FAA, made it clear that "any tendency by government agencies to proceed with caution in promulgating or enforcing regulations to promote safety must be avoided at all costs, even at the risk of being charged with undue harshness." John H. Shaffer, whose prime qualification for the job as head of the FAA appears to have been his ability to gather money for Richard Nixon's Presidential campaign, quoted the House committee's words approvingly in testimony December 9, 1969, before the Senate Administrative Practices Subcommittee shortly after he took office. But later in his testimony, when asked why National Transportation Safety Board recommendations were infrequently followed, he made clearer his understanding of the law: "The recommendations of the NTSB must be considered in the light of our basic duty to strike a balance between maintaining an acceptable level of safety in aviation and not imposing an undue burden on any segment of the public, including the aviation industry."

Ryther noted in a recent interview that twenty-one out of twenty-three top FAA officials, excluding the political appointees, had never had a job outside FAA. Some had come to the agency as high school dropouts; nineteen of the twenty-three had no college diploma. Nineteen of these top-management officials had worked together for twenty-five years or more. "They dominate the agency completely," Ryther declared. "This fraternity makes up the most bigoted, ingrown, fearful group of men that you could possibly put together. They are scared to death of being found out."

No other regulatory agency delegates so much important safety work to individuals who have financial interests that conflict with their work. The FAA, for instance, requires that each year more than 133,000 general aviation aircraft be inspected for airworthiness. These inspections are made for a fee by an individual mechanic and, says Ryther, are sometimes illegally performed without looking at the aircraft. In much the same way, general aviation pilots are licensed to fly by individuals delegated to examine their qualifications. These examiners are often air carrier operators and aircraft dealers, both of whom may have a financial stake in whether the individual gets a pilot's license.

Airworthiness inspections are made of airliners before they take off. Delegates of the FAA administrator, paid by the airlines, perform the task. There have been cases where aircraft inspectors refused to O.K. a plane and then faced threats from their employers if they did not sign them off. One mechanic working for Air West, according to Reuben Robertson, a Ralph Nader lieutenant, reported such an incident to the FAA. He was suspended from his job for insubordination and told if it happened again he would be fired.

Airworthiness is a ticklish subject with the FAA. The agency frequently issues airworthiness directives, which are published in the *Federal Register*. Airplane defects are noted and the agency requires scheduled maintenance to replace parts that can cause structural weaknesses or engine or landing gear malfunctions. It gives the appearance that the FAA is a tough regulator, but the impression is false, according to a former FAA lawyer who wrote his share of the documents. Most of the time, he says, the FAA doesn't discover the defects through its inspection system at all. The manufacturer spots them and sends out "service bulletins" of its own—with a copy to the FAA. This is picked up and long after airplane owners have been notified by the manufacturer, the FAA directive is published.

Violations of such airworthiness directives, or failure to do required maintenance, can land an airline in deep trouble—or so the law states. But accommodations are reached easily. Ryther says it is common knowledge that no airline is fined more than $1,000 for an infraction—no matter how serious. Others confirm this. One former FAA attorney remembers a case he worked on in which charges were brought that could have cost the airline $40,000 in fines. Failure to perform maintenance was discovered when the airliner limped into an airport on an emergency landing and an FAA inspector discovered the violations. The airline was able to negotiate the $40,000 in fines down to a $400 payment for a violation—not of government regulations—but of the airline's own procedures.

The airworthiness of planes on the assembly lines is also affirmed by an employee of the manufacturer whose authority is delegated by the FAA. Agency inspectors

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check the manufacturers, but Ryther found that this surveillance was too infrequent "to assure compliance with airworthiness regulations." He added: "The time that elapses between surveillance efforts invites relaxation of the quality control efforts of the companies."

Currently the most controversial of the FAA's delegated authorities is that given to doctors. Some 2,187 private physicians are designated by the FAA as Aviation Medical Examiners. They give the 60,000 commercial pilots in the nation their required physicals at least once a year. A pilot must pass this test to keep his license.

But the system is not working well, according to FAA air surgeon, Dr. Peter V. Siegel. He says the pilots have learned where to go for quickie approval from doctors who process them on an assembly line basis. Some twenty-three doctors performed 18,000 examinations in 1971; one doctor alone examined 3,000 pilots. Many doctors with reputations for "easy" examinations are never bothered by the FAA, despite the fact that some pilots with disqualifying heart disease, mental illness and addiction problems are never reported. The FAA terminates only about twelve doctors a year and knowingly allows others to continue despite the hazard the pilots present.

The FAA would like to turn the medical examining job over to the airlines, but the airlines don't relish the expense involved in setting up such a medical program. And the pilots who now pay the doctors for the examinations don't like the idea of their bosses controlling the physical examination. The pilots remember their 1948 strike against National Airlines. After it was over, National forced pilots to pass a physical performed by company-paid doctors. Those who refused were fired. Twenty-one of the pilots most active in the strike were terminated because they couldn't pass the company "physicals."

While nobody is happy with the current medieval setup, there is some evidence that the FAA and some of the airlines have benefited from its manipulation. The FAA, while allowing some medical examiners to doctor their reports rather than the pilots, has cracked down on other medical examiners. One such doctor is Emil Taxay, who was appointed an FAA medical examiner in 1961. For nine years he practiced aviation medicine and checked pilots. He got a reputation as a tough doctor. Consequently, his fees didn't amount to much from pilots because few came to him. Court papers show that Taxay was earning $1,250 a year when the FAA took his appointment away from him on March 30, 1970. The reason for his termination was never clearly explained and Dr. Taxay has since sought through the courts to force the FAA to convene a hearing to justify its stand. However, the FAA did admit that the revocation of his appointment was connected with testimony he gave to the National Transportation Safety Board. FAA did not appreciate the doctor's voluntary appearance as an expert witness for several pilots who had lost their flying licenses because of medical problems.

Another case now in the courts hints at how the airlines can manipulate the system to get rid of a pilot. Carl R. Duncan has been a pilot for National Airlines since 1956. He is known as a stickler for safety rules and has reported violations by other National pilots. In May 1968, the FAA denied him medical certification. A deposition filed in federal court last fall indicates that an FAA in-

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spector, after talking to Duncan on the phone, launched an extensive investigation because he thought the pilot was crazy. But Duncan's lawyer, Robert D. Powell, hints at darker motives behind the investigation and believes a National official tried to get rid of the pilot for personal reasons. Collusion between the FAA and the airlines in pilot ousters is not unusual, says Powell.

The FAA was beaten back in the Duncan case by the National Transportation Safety Board, which overruled the agency after a hearing. Powell says this is the second time Duncan has had trouble over his license because of a head injury sustained in a car wreck in 1960. A panel of five doctors reinstated his medical certificate in 1962, but the two doctors who voted against him in that case have played an important role in the more recent case. One is now the FAA's deputy air surgeon; the other was the prime government medical witness against him in the 1969 case. Duncan's suit against the FAA is pending.

While a few conscientious pilots and doctors must fight for their licenses, medical requirements are waived for others. A former FAA lawyer notes that special exemptions are sometimes granted to relatives of powerful Washington political figures. In one instance, he said, a relative of then President Johnson was given a pilot's license, despite the fact that medically he was not qualified. Another relative of then Vice President Hubert Humphrey received similar treatment although he, too, suffered from a heart ailment that should have disqualified him.

Although such occurrences are rare, FAA's rules on who can fly are sometimes surprising. Among the more than 700,000 pilots in the nation are 4,005 with only one eye (749 of them pilot airliners). And that one eye need only furnish "pretty good vision," according to the FAA. The federal government has barred one-eyed persons from driving trucks and busses since 1940 because their limited vision is a threat to highway safety.

But the cause of a crash is not always the pilot or the plane. The airport is also one of aviation's hazards. Four of the eight airliners that crashed last year did so during landings, according to the National Transportation Safety Board which investigates airplane wrecks. By the FAA's most recent reckoning, there are more than 12,000 aircraft landing facilities in the United States. This includes everything that an airplane, helicopter or other aircraft might conceivably use. When only the airports with paved runways are considered, the total drops to 4,176. Runways are lighted at only 3,759 locations. Some 531 airports received scheduled airline service.

While the airplanes, pilots and mechanics must meet certain FAA standards, airports escape certification. Airline pilots recommended in 1946 that airports be forced to meet certification standards. A special advisory committee recommended federal certification of airports in 1952. For its 1970 report on the FAA, the GAO auditors checked the agency's inspection reports of thirty-two airports. The FAA, said the investigators, had uncovered 1,026 safety deficiencies at these airports including runway obstructions, inadequate fire protection and poor lighting.

Congress in 1970 stuck a provision into the Airport and Airway Development Act that required the FAA to certify airports. The agency was given two years to draw up standards, but last year Congress extended the implementation date to May 1973. Even the provisions of the act which made federal funds available for airport improvement have not been enough to spur some airports. In 1971, the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) graded 488 airports—those with daily scheduled service—on crash fire and rescue equipment. The pilots found that 25 per cent of the airports had no such equipment at all. Fifteen of these 129 airports served jets. More startling still was the finding that only 25 per cent of the nation's airports had, for the aircraft using the facility, equipment that the FAA and the National Fire Protection Association suggested was adequate. Some of the airports with less than adequate fire protection included Boston's Logan Airport, Chicago's Midway, and airports in Dallas, Pittsburgh, Jacksonville, Minneapolis and Las Vegas.

Fire protection is a key safety feature in a crash because it is the fire and smoke that often cause fatalities. Last June when a Convair 580 crashed during a bad weather approach to New Haven's Tweed Airport, the NTSB found that twenty fatalities were caused by fire and smoke, not by impact. With such circumstances in mind Kelly Rueck, an airline stewardess and ALPA official, commented: "From the stewardess' viewpoint . . . she often wonders what would happen in case an emergency did occur. Even worse, she wonders if her passengers have any idea how badly the cards are stacked against them if anything goes wrong." As a result of repeated tragedies, the FAA recently required structural changes that would lessen the probability of fire hazards from fuel spillage in a crash.

The New Haven crash, like others at airports, might have been prevented if the latest instrument landing devices had been installed. Instrument landing systems, visual approach slope indicators and runway end identification lights are three of the components most needed at airports, according to the airline pilots. Nearly 60 per cent of the nation's 530 airports were without instrument landing systems last year by the pilots' count. The FAA said in 1955 that the instrument landing system was necessary airport equipment. However, visual approach slope indicators and runway end identification lights are rarer. Only about 4 per cent of the nation's runways are so equipped. These landing aids, while rare, are only part of the complex electronic web that is part of the FAA's safety mechanism—air traffic control.

The government first got into air traffic control in 1936 when the Bureau of Air Commerce took over three en route traffic control centers in Newark, Chicago and Cleveland. Predictably, the centers which formed the nucleus of what have become twenty-one strategically placed airway guides were developed by the fledgling airline industry of that era for its own protection.

Although the system has changed dramatically over the years with the addition of control towers, radar and computers, its purpose has remained basically the same. It is designed to give pilots and ground controllers position information to keep airplanes on course and aid in preventing midair collisions. The FAA likes to keep up with modern terminology, even if it lags far behind in other areas, and refers to the present complex of equipment as the National Airspace System.

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But the system has a serious, basic flaw that contributes to the more than four midair collisions narrowly avoided each day. "Over a period of many years," the House Government Operations Committee noted in a report last March, "the public has been led to believe that the nation's air traffic control system watches over all aircraft in the air, protecting the traveler from the danger of midair collisions. In fact, the nation does not have an air traffic control system. We have two air traffic control systems." These two systems, as imperfect as is each by itself, together lay the groundwork for tragedy because they are not necessarily compatible.

Most of the 133,000 general aviation aircraft operate under visual flight regulations (VFR). The 23,000 commercial and military airplanes operate under instrument flight regulations (IFR). As its name implies the visual rules are simply "see and be seen." Cockpit vision is often limited and atmospheric conditions sometimes contribute to poor visibility. At the speeds of today's aircraft, even perfect visibility might not be good enough to avoid collision, but the problem is complicated by the fact that pilots flying under instrument rules are not likely to be looking for another aircraft in their path. The FAA's "eyeball philosophy," as Capt. John J. O'Donnell, head of the Air Line Pilots Association, calls it, "should have gone out in the early 1940s."

Air traffic controllers have their work cut out for them keeping the two types of aircraft away from each other. "In areas of light and moderate VFR traffic, controllers provide advisory information to IFR aircraft about the location of VFR aircraft that might be operating nearby," the House committee noted. "In congested areas, where advisory information of this kind is most needed, the number of VFR aircraft on the controllers' radar scopes is often so large as to overwhelm their ability to warn IFR traffic of VFR that might become a collision threat."

Under such conditions it is clear why the committee is so insistent that a collision avoidance device be carried on each airplane. But the FAA has completely abdicated its safety role in this field, too. After active participation in an airborne collision avoidance system during the 1950s, the committee said, the FHA downgraded its own efforts and let the Air Transport Association take over.

Although the FAA has just about thrown in the towel on the project, the House committee maintains, "we have collision avoidance technology almost within our grasp, but the economic considerations may halt or delay system implementation even after the technical problems that remain have been solved." If the system is to be effective, all aircraft must carry the collision avoidance mechanism. The cost now projected is prohibitive for most general aviation aircraft. However, airline officials, in the words of the 1970 House committee report, "in despair over the inadequacy of the air traffic control picture, hope through the use of this [anti-collision] equipment to at least avoid midair collision with other airliners."

The FAA has developed a ten-year plan to upgrade airports, its foundation being a trust fund set up by the Airport and Airway Development Act of 1970 and financed by user taxes similar to those that support the Highway Trust Fund. Grants are made on a sharing basis, but many communities argue that the fifty-fifty arrangement stipulated in the law is too great a burden for their airports. A proposal is now before Congress to increase the federal share. About $230 million will be spent under the airport aid program this year. Although it is seen as a step forward in improving airport safety, the plan has been criticized. "The length of time now planned by your agency for the installation of landing aids is so inadequate that it can only invite more accidents," ALPA told the FAA's Shaffer last fall. "We believe that your agency has not been attuned to the increasingly dangerous airport environment that airline pilots must endure on a daily basis."

Somewhat more restrained was a report last December from the House Government Operations Committee. "The FAA continues to operate under arbitrary funding guidelines of the Office of Management and Budget that portend only the most tragic consequences," the committee said. It added, however, that the agency itself had failed in the past to anticipate the increased air traffic. The House committee estimated that $1.8 billion would be needed for improvements.

The air traveling public, ignorant of the despair expressed by industry, Congress and the pilots, and the potential for tragedy lurking behind accident figures that show only .097 fatalities per 100,000 airliner hours flown (the figure is 2.47 for general aviation), gets more worked up about airline hijackers. But airliner hijacking, while a real problem, is dwarfed by the basic considerations of air safety. Since 1930, the number of successful hijackings on a worldwide basis has been less than 300; during the same period, slightly more than 100 hijackings have been successfully carried out in the United States. Yet since 1961 there have been 774 airline crashes—117 of them causing fatalities that have killed 2,818. And these figures do not include the 55,308 general aviation crashes during the same time, nor the 12,470 deaths they caused.

As a result of FAA laxity and slowness in the past, the real problems are only now coming into view. By 1983 there is expected to be an 80 per cent increase in the number of pilots; a 31 per cent increase in the number of airliners; a growth of 60 per cent in general aviation. The advances in air travel are outstripping the government's feeble attempts to police it. As the traffic problem in the skies becomes more acute, the failures of the government will be increasingly difficult to hide.

Hard as it may be to close the gap quickly, it will never be done unless the FAA is rejuvenated in a major reorganization. Philip Ryther has his own recommendations. He confided them to President Nixon a year ago but got no positive response. He asked the President to fire the seven top men at FAA. Ryther feels that fresh faces and approaches at the FAA would put an end to the passive neglect he found of air safety, the dominance of the air industry over policy matters and the schizophrenia that has split the agency between its duties of fostering aviation and making it safe.

If changes are not made quickly, all the fancy public relations in the world will not be able to turn the FAA's past failures into a future hope. A timid guardian of the skies will become recognized for what it is—the major obstacle to air safety. □

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FAITH AND LIBEL

SCIENTOLOGY FIGHTS BACK

CLAY STEINMAN
Mr. Steinman is a free-lance writer living in New York.

Like all true believers, the members of the young Church of Scientology (or Dianetics as it is sometimes known) believe they have found the answers. A visit to their New York headquarters in the Hotel Martinique shows that Scientology has at least put smiles on a few faces and seems to have solved many of the existential problems of the members who work and study there.

According to the recent U. S. Army Chaplain School's booklet, "The Newer Religions," a seemingly nonpartisan source, Scientology was officially founded in 1955 by L. Ron Hubbard, a former science fiction and screen writer. The booklet says there are currently 600,000 members in the church. The Rev. James Meisler, Scientology's public relations man in New York, said recently that there were about 3 million followers in this country and about 15 million Scientologists in the world. By any count, Scientology is alive and flourishing.

The practice and theology of Scientology is not easy to pin down—partly because they keep changing in accord with a constant flow of edicts issued by Hubbard from his headquarters on a yacht in the Mediterranean. A lot has been written about the church, but unfortunately most of it comes either from the church itself or from writers intent on hatchet jobs. Probably everyone who has written about or been involved in Scientology, however, would agree that the following from Hubbard himself, written in 1969, just about sums it up:

> Our mission in Scientology is a simple one—it is to help the individual become aware of himself as an immortal Being and to help him achieve and attain the basic truths with regard to himself, his relationship with others across the Dynamics, his relationship to the physical universe and the Supreme Being. Further we want to erase his sin so that he can be good enough to recognize God.

That sounds innocent enough: a religion which uses the traditional confessional as a therapy to achieve liberation; a religion whose catechism glitters with science fiction terms—"thetan," "engram," "misunderstoods," "E-meters" and "orgs"—a faith that speaks of knowledge of life in the womb and in earlier reincarnated forms.

In practice, however, Scientology may not be as innocent as it sounds. Scientologists are more than eccentrics: they are fanatics. Strange stories about the church abound. And some of those who have told them have suffered for it—have been harassed and, possibly more important, have met with attempts to silence them. Hubbard himself once wrote in Scientology's *Ability* magazine that "we should be very alert to sue for slander at the slightest chance, so as to discourage the public press from mentioning Scientology." Meisler says that this policy is no longer in effect. Whether it is or not, not wishing to invite a possible suit, my critical comments about the church will be limited to discussing an actual complaint that has been filed in court against it.

One of Scientology's key rituals involves what are called "auditing" sessions. In these encounters, run by a church-trained auditor, the subject or "pre-clear" is asked to reveal his or her innermost self and feelings. Using the E-meter, a device resembling a galvanometer, Scientologists believe they can discover every repressed aspect of a person's present and past lives. That may be all right for emotionally stable people who can benefit from talking about what they have long held back, but it also leads Scientologists to accuse anyone who attacks the church of having something to hide, of being afraid to be audited. Why else would they malign Scientology?

Since *The New York Times* v. *Sullivan* case, it has been hard to win a libel suit in the United States. Plaintiffs must prove "malice and a reckless disregard for the facts" in order to win in cases that involve matters considered of interest to the public. Nevertheless, in the last five years, the Scientologists have initiated at least seven libel actions in this country. In Britain, where libel laws are rougher, they have sued more often.

Paulette Cooper is a 27-year-old free-lance writer who has lately been tangling with the Scientologists. In 1969, she wrote an article entitled "The Tragi-Farce of Scientology" for Britain's *Queen* magazine. Shortly after publication, the Scientologists sued the magazine for libel. The publishers decided to settle out of court for a token amount. In the settlement papers, *Queen* agreed that the "allegations complained of are untrue," and that the magazine "withdraws them unreservedly." A suit against Cooper, filed last year in Britain, is pending.

Since the *Queen* article, Cooper has become an established writer. During her short career, she has published three books: a children's book, a book called *Growing Up Puerto Rican* (she is Jewish) and *The Scandal of Scientology*. She has also sold fifty-seven articles on various topics, including a Dutch satanic cult which she infiltrated and wrote about for *The New York Times*. According to Cooper, *The Scandal of Scientology* has sold almost 200,000 copies in a Tower Publishing Co. paperback.

The author lives in a disheveled, one-room apartment on New York's East Side. When you visit her on an afternoon she offers you a drink, has one or two herself and she chain-smokes. She likes to talk. A little more than 5 feet tall, with carefully treated golden-brown hair, she appears much more frail in person than her glamorous publicity pictures would have you believe. She happily tells you that she and her lawyers have filed a $15.3 million suit against Scientology.

When she talks about why she filed the suit, though, and reads through her 15-page complaint, you can tell she has been affected by what has happened to her. She laughs, but her laughter is nervous. "I like the David and Goliath story," she says, "and so I'm fighting back." According to her complaint, the Scientologists secured a copy

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of her manuscript before it was published by Tower in June of 1971. (Meisler said it was mailed to the church by an anonymous donor. "We have supporters everywhere," he cheerfully explained.) What follows is detailed in Cooper's complaint.

On March 23, 1971, Scientology lawyer Joel Kreiner wrote Jean Glass, a Tower editor handling the book, and warned her that ". . . Miss Cooper's manuscript was refused publication in the U.K. due to its libelous content." Cooper has never been successfully sued for libel. However, she has been sued, and that earlier affected her attempts to sell the book to British publishers. Both the New English Library (a division of the Times-Mirror Co.) and Hodder and Stoughton turned down the manuscript. In a letter to Cooper, Laurence James of the NEL told her that although he "liked it very much indeed . . . the British libel laws are such that we would be certain to be taken to court by the Scientologists." Cooper's agent in London, Victor Briggs, wrote her that the situation was essentially the same at Hodder and Stoughton.

As Cooper explains it, this fear of suit extended to America. She claims that one prominent publisher—whom she will not identify until the case comes to court—would have printed the book if he had not been afraid of libel. Even if he had won such a suit, the costs of going to court in this country are high.

Once Tower had bought the book and the Scientologists had the manuscript, church representatives sent the publisher three telegrams, all threatening suit if the book came out. It did, and in November suits were filed against both Tower and Cooper by Scientology lawyers in California. The defendants are now trying to get the suit switched to New York, where Tower is located.

Cooper also claims that, among other things, Scientologists tapped her phone, followed her "closely and obtrusively" on the street, made obscene phone calls to her late at night, and tried to serve a process on her at 2:30 in the morning, after waking a 72-year-old neighbor to ask him questions about her. She says they tried to date her as a means of acquiring information. And she says they harassed her when she went to Scotland, serving a patently invalid process on her—which was never followed up with a valid one—as she got off the plane. She says Scientologists posing as FBI men and with letters supposedly signed J. Edgar Hoover, questioned acquaintances about her.

Most important, perhaps, Cooper says that her case is typical of efforts by Scientologists to silence anyone who writes critically of the church. Her complaint alleges that Scientology has filed 100 libel suits in the last two years in the United States and Britain. Among those who have been sued in America, in addition to Tower and herself, are the American Medical Association and the National Education Association, Fairchild Publications (for an article in *Women's Wear Daily*), *The Washington Post* and George Malko, along with Delacorte Press, for his book, *Scientology—The Now Religion*. The Scientologists have also sued *Realist* publisher Paul Krassner. And they've tried to block the publication of an Olympia Press book about the church by Robert Kaufman. They have also threatened to sue *Life*, the Rev. Lester Kinsolving of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *Parents' Magazine*, to name a few, according to Cooper.

Scientology has won none of these suits. The actions against Tower, Cooper, the AMA and NEA, Delacorte, Malko and Krassner are all in process, with no quick settlement in sight. The suits against *Women's Wear Daily* and *The Washington Post* were dropped. And a hearing is to be held some time in May on the Kaufman book.

Most of those who have been sued say this action against them was part of an effort to stifle criticism of the church. Steve Baird, head of Delacorte's legal department, said "they were trying to harass us." Both Malko and Dennis Sheahan of *Women's Wear Daily* told me, however, that except for the suits themselves, Scientology has not bothered them. Cooper claims she has been harassed to the point of bringing suit against the church.

All of this makes the Scientologists sound a bit like villains, what with libel suits, and, as alleged in her complaint, phone tapping, shadowing and obscene phone calls. Not surprisingly, Meisler said he sees the whole thing quite differently. Hubbard's directive to sue when possible, he explained, came at a time when the church had no resources for public relations. Since then, Meisler claimed, suits have been initiated only as attempts to correct false-

S. Savage

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hoods. As Meisler put it, when the Scientologists try to stop the publication of a book, they do so only to stop the spreading of lies. Meisler doesn't deny that Cooper may have been harassed, but he does deny that Scientologists had any part in it. "We're not the CIA," he explained, "we're a church."

He may be right when he says that Cooper has developed lots of enemies in the course of her writing career, any of whom could have harassed her. He says she is suing for the money and the publicity. And he claims Cooper couldn't sell her book to a publisher more established than Tower because it's just not very good.

The book *isn't* very good. Although everything in it is carefully documented, the sources are often questionable. The presentation is sensational and the writing is mediocre. The overwhelming majority of the material was dug from newspaper clippings and reports of governmental commissions outside the United States. There is almost no first-hand research.

Meisler, in his mid-20s, seemed a sincere man. He moved and spoke awkwardly, and was dressed in clothes that, though neat, looked unstylishly old and worn. His appearance did not at all suggest the slick public relations man. He wore a cross in his lapel and, while speaking, frequently brought his hands together as though in prayer. Like all of the Scientologists in the New York headquarters, he was friendly. After listening to him, I could see that what he said made sense on his terms. He certainly didn't seem the kind of man who would order a secret police into action. Mostly, he laughed off Cooper's suit. "I consider it pretty much of a joke," he said, referring to many of the allegations. I left the interview unsure as to who the villains were in the affair, or, indeed, if there were any villains. Perhaps the whole thing was just a case of people not understanding one another, of being unable or unwilling to confront different world views.

Three days later, though, Meisler did something that somewhat changed my view of the matter. He called me to say that he had something to add to our conversation, that he had written it down, and that he wanted to read it to me. Here is the statement: "We welcome the opportunity to bring Miss Cooper to the courts where she can be investigated fully, as we have begun one ourselves and find shocking evidence." I asked a few questions: "What kind of investigation?" "What kind of evidence? I thought you didn't investigate anyone." "We don't investigate anyone, people gave us this information unsolicited," he said. I asked him again what specifically he was talking about in the way of evidence, and he told me to wait a second, he had something written down about that too. He said he didn't want to be too specific—that might jeopardize their chances in court—but he would tell me in general what he was talking about. The Reverend Meisler giggled and then he said it: "Paulette's been very, very naughty."

My first reaction to that was that Meisler wasn't much of a public relations man, that his statements were the product of his own mind, with its own view of the world and human beings, separate from that of the church. A few days later, though, I came upon a communication from L. Ron Hubbard, dated February 15, 1966; Meisler has verified its authenticity. Entitled "Attacks on Scientology," the edict from Hubbard stipulates in part:

> Anyone proposing an investigation or an "enquiry" into Scientology *must* receive this reply and no other proposal: "We welcome an investigation into (Mental Healing or whoever is attacking us) as we have begun one ourselves and find shocking evidence."

This sort of thing might be amusingly weird, but it's not so funny if you're a writer and find that threats of libel action are keeping you from being published or preventing you from making money on work you have done. Most authors' contracts state that, in case of libel suit, legal fees and any indemnities will come out of the writer's royalties. Cooper says that, what with her suit in England, the California suit against both her and Tower, and the improperly served process in Scotland which she had to pay to have investigated, she'll be lucky to break even on her association with Scientology. If she wins her suit against the church, a large chunk of the award will go to her lawyer, Paul Rheingold—the man who successfully sued General Motors on Ralph Nader's behalf—and a large chunk will go to a fund she says she'll set up to help writers who get into hassles like hers. At any rate, although Cooper and her lawyer say they are optimistic, the suit itself is no guaranteed winner. Rheingold has a lot to prove. And even though he told me that he can drop parts of the complaint if he finds he can't prove them when and if the case comes to trial, beating the Scientologists won't be easy. Meisler implied that the church was wealthy when he told me the loss of the entire $15.3 million would not significantly affect the organization's financial status. The Scientologists evidently have a lot of money to spend in their fight against Cooper.

The church has until the end of this month to answer the suit. But whatever happens, whoever wins—whatever that means in a situation like this—the tactic of suing to stifle comment will still be available to those who can afford it. If you have money and don't like what's being said about you, sue. Win or lose, you'll scare off some people. People who can't afford or don't want to spend money on the high legal costs of defending against a libel action will be silenced. You may not stop everyone, but you'll quiet a lot of people.

The Scientology affair is not an isolated case. On April 30, *The New York Times* reported that International Telephone and Telegraph Company officials had somehow received a copy of a manuscript by Harlan M. Blake, Columbia law professor, exposing their alleged cozy relations with the Justice Department. The ITT officials also learned that the manuscript would be published in the June issue of *Harper's*. The corporation representatives told the editors at *Harper's* that if they went ahead, ITT would sue for libel. *Harper's* editor Robert Shnayerson apparently has the will and the resources to ignore the ITT threat. He's printing the piece. But suppose a publication so threatened were not as big and powerful as *Harper's*? Suppose the same thing happened to a local newspaper? Or a small television station?

The potential for stifling criticism through wanton libel suits seriously affects the freedoms outlined in the First Amendment. Perhaps it's true that you need lots of money to print the truth without fear or favor, true that freedom of the press—like the press itself—belongs to the rich. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Babbitt *at Fifty—The Truth Still Hurts*

GEORGE H. DOUGLAS
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Sinclair Lewis' novel *Babbitt* will be fifty years old this fall. Its publication in September 1922 not only secured the literary fame and fortune of Lewis himself—at the time he had published only one other best-selling novel—but, as everyone knows, contributed a new word to the American language, and one of the most celebrated pieces of self-criticism to American culture.

Some will say that *Babbitt* is the kind of novel that would no longer be widely read if it were not a historical monument, part of the American pageant. Indeed it is widely held today that Sinclair Lewis himself is not a writer of very considerable importance. Mark Schorer concluded his massive biography of Lewis by remarking that "he was one of the worst writers in modern American literature." But in spite of this sort of judgment there is something of compelling interest about Lewis and his work—indeed, if this were not so, it would be hard to imagine why Schorer would devote 800 pages to him. There is something about Lewis that we can't quite purge from our national psyche, something we can't easily put aside. But what is it?

It's not a matter of art—at least in one very important meaning of that word. If there is a single thing that all the critics agree upon today, it is that Lewis was a poor master of the art of the novel—his plots were foolish and unbelievable, his characters wooden and superficial (anything resembling character development was unknown to Lewis), his human understanding and tragic insight feeble and undisciplined.

In the early years Lewis was much praised by the critics because he had a well-tuned ear and an uncanny ability to record the speech of his fellow countrymen, because he seemed to have absorbed every idiosyncrasy of the national species and was possessed of a certain malicious genius that enabled him to transfer it all to paper. He was our great national photographer, said E. M. Forster—"neither a poet or preacher, but a fellow with a camera a few yards away." When he chose to snap the lens, he came away with an exact likeness of his subject.

Of course we know that even this is not precisely true. And *Babbitt* is a good case in point. Reading the novel today, one thing is clear. The realistic details—the photographs if you like—are usually of poor quality. The details of Lewis' portraits are almost always askew, and the things he was supposed to be able to do best, like render the atmosphere of a local Rotary luncheon or a salesman's inane conversation, always seem off the mark. Zenith, Ohio, the setting of *Babbitt*, never comes into focus as a real American city—sometimes its description suggests a city of 25,000 people, sometimes a city of 250,000. One gets the feeling that Lewis didn't really know what kind of city he was writing about, and what's more didn't really care. (Theodore Dreiser, in *Jennie Gerhardt*, did a better job of realistically capturing the flavor of Columbus, Ohio, a city he had never seen, than Lewis did with any of his oft-visited representative American towns.)

Most of Lewis' minor details are equally out of focus. Babbitt's real estate business is described with a curious lack of precision. Sometimes we are given to understand that Babbitt is a small businessman dealing in inexpensive suburban property; in other places he appears to be a fairly large-scale operator involved in big projects. Oddities of this sort abound in the novel, and always one has the impression that Lewis wasn't really interested in getting things right, that he was sloppy and careless when it came to putting down a picture of the American scene—even those aspects of it that interested him the most.

Well, then, if we can no longer take Lewis seriously as a master of the art of the novel, if we can't even take him seriously as a precise and indefatigable realist or journalist, are there any laurels left for him? Yes, there are, and we are obliged to admit that Lewis commands a place of some kind in the American pantheon, and that he still speaks to us with force and authority. For while he may no longer be an important "novelist," although the specific objects of his satire may now be little more than indistinct historical relics, Lewis is a significant writer because he grappled doggedly with some elemental qualities of our experience, including a number that he was the first to identify. What is more important, they are qualities that are as persistent today as they were in the 1920s.

No novel of Lewis' illustrates this better than *Babbitt*. It has often been observed that one of the great contributions of this work was that it succeeded in naming an American phenomenon, and the act of naming, of course, has always been one of the primary functions of the poet or artist conceived in the widest sense. By this I do not mean that all Lewis did was to catch the essence of the smug, complacent booster or joiner, the self-satisfied and unimaginative small-town businessman. This he did, of course, but if that were the limit of his achievement, *Babbitt* would be to us today a faded novel, its chief character a mere curiosity of second-rate American literature. The truth is that Lewis had hit upon, and long struggled to understand, a deeply rooted disease of the American spirit. There is no single name for this disease but its symptoms are familiar enough.

Lewis was tormented, as other American writers were before him—writers as diverse as Cooper and Thoreau—by the contrast between the promise of America and the often unhealthy results of American life. Lewis always thought Americans to be a good people, a promising people, and he looked for great things from them, but American social life had about it a suffocating quality that wouldn't allow this goodness to breathe.

Lewis never really enjoyed his great talent for ticking off the symptoms of this disease. It has often been remarked that he could never work up a fair and complete portrait of his fellow Americans because he despised them so heartily that he had no detached perspective on them. But he was no Jonathan Swift. Indeed, he was an imperfect satirist precisely because he could never really hate the Babbitts and Elmer Gantrys he went after, but was always searching for something good to come from them, a search which, nevertheless, continually proved futile.

Babbitt is a perfect manifestation of the national malady that fascinated Lewis throughout his career. In spite of the utter complacency and conformity in which Babbitt later became enmeshed, we are told that in college he was "an unusually liberal, sensitive chap," who wanted to

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be a lawyer and dreamed of taking cases of the poor without fee. Even in later life, after Babbitt has given up, and slipped into complete spiritual inertia, we find him struggling to get out of his stereotyped life, the supposed virtues of which he is always publicly trumpeting. Not that Babbitt himself is a great tragic figure—he is too puny a soul for that—but he isn't exactly a cipher or empty vessel either. Like so many Americans, he had begun life under favorable skies, with the whole world open to him, but somehow he got stuck, allowed himself to fall into rigid patterns of behavior from which he could never extricate himself.

But he knew he was stuck. He knew he had started out with a vast possibility for personal action in a free land, and that he had sold himself out. At the end of the book we find him trying to convince his even more foolish and vacuous son, Theodore Roosevelt Babbitt, to do something individual, something worth while. "Practically I've never done a single thing I've wanted to do in my whole life," he admits dolefully. Still, he had spent his life making abortive attempts to extricate himself from the social conditions in which he had become entangled—he reached out for a friendship with Paul Riesling, a tender and sensitive poet. No use. He tried a brief love affair, but gave it up rather than face ostracism on the part of the community. Always he knew, in the depths of his soul, that he was entitled to break loose—such is the American right and destiny—always he knew that he wanted to do so, but in the end he gave up the battle and accepted the immolation of self and soul.

The tale thus speaks eloquently of one of the saddest and most enduring American verities. I say most enduring since it is obvious that *Babbitt* is no outdated story of small-town business society, vintage 1920. The great issue that tormented Lewis is still with us, even though we no longer think of the small-town Rotarian as being a spiritual center of gravity in our society, even though Babbitt's manners and morals are no longer important enough to get under our skin. Prestige and respectability have moved to big government, to the technostructure of the large corporations, to the research universities—away from Zenith or Gopher Prairie. But there is no reason to think that Babbitt has not shifted with the times, no reason to doubt that he appears in new clothing in these newer institutions, and continues his struggle to find some fresh air and freedom in them.

And there is no reason to believe that the stultification of desire, the standardization of manners, morals and ideas is a product of the small town alone. Or that "businessmen" have a monopoly on it. Our society, our major institutions, because of their very largeness and complexity, always involve a certain rigidity of action, require a certain amount of uniformity and conformity of behavior (the social scientists began discovering this after World War II, thirty years after Lewis had identified the phenomenon with precision). Of course, we can all freely choose, in theory at least, to make our noble individual contributions. We can take up the law, or medicine, or social work, or we can become college teachers. But it is part of the tragedy of our modern life that even the lofty professions have about them in our society a certain inflexibility that we cannot easily escape. We become locked into these pursuits, we adopt the respectable habits of thought that go with them, and we break out of them only at our peril. The professor just as easily as a small-town real estate dealer binds himself into a set of conventions from which there is no easy release.

The conditions under which this kind of thing happens fascinated Lewis, and, if he could never completely explain it, he was the first to give it an artistic rendering. Lewis' Midwestern youth obviously had impressed upon him the sharp contrast between the great destiny of America—its openness and flexibility—and the painful limits that were finally forced upon its social life. This was his major theme. Perhaps there always lingered in him a feeling of desperate contrast between the wide open spaces of northern Minnesota with its brisk fresh air, and the constricting space of the stale settlements nearby. Like James Fenimore Cooper he wished for an America that was open, one where a man could always go out beyond the established communities, away from the church, away from lawyers, away from the sellers of land. But like Cooper, too, Lewis came to see that this was all an impossible dream. In a vestigial way it was the dream dreamed by all Americans, even the lowest Babbitt in the land, and Lewis always hoped that Babbitt would continue to dream it, and that some day the dreaming would do some good. Meanwhile, it was Lewis' genius to have perceived how and why, in the complex social world of the 20th century, this great American dream was often nothing but a faint and powerless shadow, consigned to the dark recesses of the mind. □

One Woman's Meat . . .

THE FORTUNATE SEX. *By Dorothy Evslin. Saturday Review Press. 216 pp. $5.95.*

THE FUTURE OF MARRIAGE. *By Jessie Bernard. World Publishing Co. 384 pp. $7.95.*

BARBARA HARRISON
Ms. Harrison is a free-lance writer and reviewer. She is currently at work on a book for Liveright documenting the efforts of feminist parents at the Woodward School in Brooklyn, N.Y., to provide non-sexist education for their elementary school children.

Jessie Bernard, the author of five previous books, was, until her retirement, professor of sociology at Penn State. Dorothy Evslin, a New Rochelle housewife, teaches English at Westchester Community College. Ms. Bernard is very much her own woman. Mrs. Evslin is very much her husband's wife.

Bernard—a middle-aged gentlewoman, but nevertheless a "Young Turk" (and she would be the first to deplore the chauvinism implicit in that appellation)—excoriates traditional marriage, contending that it literally "makes women sick."

Evslin—who seems to have been born to enjoy an intimate association with potted plants and spins treacle as if it were gold—extols and exalts the traditional role of woman, and celebrates the years of her union with Mr. Evslin: "I'd like to tell them like a rosary."

Reading these books back to back, one feels like an Alice jet-propelled through the looking glass, with occasional side trips through a revolving door. Bernard says that the socialization process "deforms" little girls so that they may conform to societally approved roles that satisfy the economic necessities and psychological needs of the ruling class (i.e., men). Evslin says, of her girl children: They are "little princesses trying to please . . . hopelessly enslaved to the idea of being pleasing, of creating a web of beauty to softly trap a man."

"To . . . trap a man"? It is no secret that men curse at marriage or make jokes about it, denigrate it and complain about it; but, says Bernard, they "never cease to want, need and profit from 'the trap.'" It makes them happy; it's good for them. Research evidence is overwhelming: men need marriage more than women do. The mental health of married men is better than that of single men, and better than that of

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married women. Married men commit fewer crimes than do married women. The suicide rate is higher for unmarried men than for unmarried women. However much they may rail at the restrictions marriage imposes upon them, there is "no better guarantor of long life, health, and happiness for men than a wife well socialized to perform 'the duties of a wife.' "

Bernard's research (much of it done in the 1950s, the "togetherness" decade) leads her to conclude that there are, in any one marriage, two marriages—"his" and "hers." And "her" marriage is so costly, so damaging, that it constitutes a public health hazard. (The mystical union that Evslin pays homage to—"You are mistress, and he is master and everything is cosmically correct"—does not, statistically speaking, exist.) Even when women define their marriages as happy, they are likely to suffer poor mental and emotional health: more married women than married men experience psychological and physical anxiety, suffer phobic reactions and depression. More married women than unmarried women are troubled by fears of high places or by fears that they are being followed, cry easily, complain of having their feelings hurt easily, are institutionalized—the list is endless. And the worst of it is that women believe that "it's their fault," that they deserve their misery because of their failure to "adjust." The name of the game is self-hate.

Evslin stands in awe of men, and she pities them, because they have to find "a work." (And, speaking of the dues women have to pay, think how expensive it must be to have to juggle pity and awe!) "A man has to act out his beliefs, reaffirm his link to the world." Fortunate woman, "beloved for herself," has "the privilege" of not establishing her identity in the world; she can change her name, leave off saying *me,* "assume the gold ring of servitude."

But why? Why must she sacrifice her autonomy, her selfhood? (If a man were to obliterate his ego and choose not to establish his identity in the world, he would be adjudged a social misfit, a candidate for the monastery or the looney bin. In *A Star Is Born,* the character played by James Mason walked into the sea because someone called him by the name of his wife, whose fame had superseded his. What Mason killed himself for, woman is trained to live for.) And for what?

So that, Evslin tells us, she may devote herself to the fulfilling task of "restoring the manhood" of her ulcer- and status-ridden mate; so that she may remain unsullied by what the lady refers to with contempt as "the male commodity market." (She would seem to be saying that we must despise the market, and adore the creator of it.) What Evslin is really saying is that it's cushy to be kept.

Is it? Not according to Bernard, who says that women who work outside the home show fewer symptoms of psychological distress, are less likely to be psychotic, than women who are exclusively housewives. (Housewives are "driven mad" because they labor in dead-end jobs, in isolated prisons, in stultifying loneliness.)

Nonsense, says Evslin. Lucky woman is the "organizer and architect" of her own days. She can go to antique sales and to galleries, she can grow tulips. She can make "every dinner a celebration." She can revel in the sounds and textures and colors of her domestic world. She can "harvest perceptual realities."

Evslin dismisses women liberationists as spoiled upper-middle-class brats who have never been faced with "the challenging necessities of thrift and management." But to whom, in fact, are her homilies addressed? What "perceptual realities" can a ghetto mother joyfully harvest? She exhorts us to take pleasure in the simple joys of housewifery—"sunlight streaming through a kitchen window," for example. It does not occur to her that, while the sunny kitchen windows of New Rochelle may indeed look out upon green and pleasant views, the kitchen windows of decaying inner-city tenements offer the prisoner within no such surcease from pain. Nor does Evslin suggest how it is possible to make dinner a celebration when the food-stamp menu is bologna sandwiches and cold cereal.

Bernard has a better grasp of social realities. She knows that the real beneficiaries of the unpaid work of women are "employers and exploiters of men against whom the aggression of unsoothed men would wreak itself." Wives support the infrastructure of government and industry; employers would have to pay for the domestic services that keep men fit if women didn't perform those "priceless" services. However indirectly, the wife who soothes the forehead of a work-weary husband applies balm to the brows of Secretary Laird and Henry Ford.

Evslin finds all this talk about cash value for work performed distasteful, not to say vulgar. Beseeching us to take refuge from the nastinesses of the commercial world by cultivating our pretty suburban gardens, she asks why women should find cooking for and serving a family unfulfilling when it is considered "liberated" to be a (paid) "woman food editor." Why should women aspire to be child psychologists, when they can raise their own kids for love—which, as everybody knows, is superior to money? She tells us that women *should be* pleased to work without pay. The fact is—and women's liberation did not invent this fact—they *aren't.* Why should they be? If we told young boys that the "gold ring of servitude" automatically conferred upon them a lifetime job as an unpaid janitor, marriage would go out of style tomorrow.

We may deplore it all we like, but we live in a society in which one's value is measured by one's paycheck: "If half the world operates in a cash-nexus world, the half that does not is at a distinct disadvantage." Try talking about the second tree from the corner to the man obsessed with the gross national product.

One may argue, as Evslin does, that economic realities notwithstanding, fortunate woman has the better portion: nurturing and mothering are surely more generous, life-sustaining activities than commuting and competing. To this Bernard says, "Right on!" But if women's work is so terrific, why not let men in on these humane and gratifying activities? Why should not both partners work half-day and devote the other half to caring for the home and the children? Role sharing (to which industry, of course, would have to accommodate itself) would release the wife from boredom and isolation; it would release the husband from the onerous responsibility of having to be the sole provider.

But staying within her role, Evslin protests, gives woman tremendous

IF STARS COULD SETTLE DOWN AND WATCH THE WAVES FALL

My body's what the waves could not remember.
Tonight the sea's too much a child to write here.

Instead I watch lights through my window
cars that stop and start at them like buddhas.

I'll say
that men inside them are my lovers:
thin and blond, or short

with deep black eyebrows.
They collect the trash
along the sidewalk—

it's a fat man walking backwards
or a frog with broken throat
who swims where land swims.

Rochelle Ratner

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power. What it does not confer upon her, Bernard counters, is authority. The wife is often the more powerful person in the marriage. Authority is always vested in the male. A powerful woman bears "the stigma of a deviant." Caught between the demands of her own nature and social imperatives, she must dissemble. Taught from childhood to use her guile to trap a man (and not to let him know he's been had), taught always to maintain the illusion of subservience, she may spend a lifetime dissembling. If she's lucky, and relatively well-off, she ends up on the analyst's couch. If she's unlucky, and not well-off, she ends up as Mrs. Portnoy. In either case, she becomes ludicrous, an object of scorn. The manipulative, devious, nagging wife, the "castrating" wife, is often a strong woman who must subvert her strength. She and her "castrated" husband are both victims of traditional marriage.

Marriage has been making women sick for centuries. Only recently have women begun to refuse to accept the blame for their pathology. They have been ill-used; they are angry. Their anger appalls Evslin; she calls it "one of our dreadful modern pollutants." But her own words demonstrate the reason for its existence: the older woman who has poured energy into a career instead of into her husband may find, she says, that "her appeal is a bit withered," particularly if she has a few children (the little sources of all delight suddenly become—when a woman wants to attract a man—liabilities); her husband, his energy spent in the job jungle, will not want a withered hag. If he "meets a woman who can find and respond to his deeper longings, who will not take his pay by day and turn her back at night, he will have an affair. He may seek a divorce."

What Evslin is saying is that a man who is the worse for wear is ready to adorn another (unwithered) woman's life; a woman who is the worse for wear is ready for the garbage heap. What Evslin is expressing is hatred for her own sex. That self-hate, which has allowed men to call us masochists and consign us to the garbage heap without guilt, is what the anger of militant feminists (which is like a religious conversion, like a leap into belief) burns away.

Evslin writes out of personal experience. One may not, of course, suggest to her that her perceptions of her own marriage are false. One can, however, point out that what is sauce for her is poison for most.

Bernard's arguments derive from statistics; but she does not write within the "straightjacket of objectivity." She cares passionately about the marriage of wives; and she gracefully acknowledges her debt to the ferocious pioneers of the women's movement whose beautiful anger translated statistics into passion, the passion that will change forever the relations between the sexes and restore to women the right to seek a work in the world.

For many of us now, though we may yearn for intimacy, for companionship, heterosexual love, union, the climate is one of perpetual rage. In the words of George Sand, "We must not dissimulate nor try to forget this indignation which is one of the most passionate forms of love."

One thinks of those terrible, and yet exhilarating, final words in *A Passage to India*:

> "We shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then . . . and then," he concluded, half kissing him, "you and I shall be friends."
>
> "Why can't we be friends now?" said the other. "It's what I want. It's what you want."
>
> But . . . the earth didn't want it; it said in a hundred voices, "No, not yet," and the sky said, "No, not there."

What the Indian Aziz said to his beloved enemy, the representative of the British ruling class, is true of men and women today: there may be a will to love; until we are free, there is no way. □

Six Japanese Novels

DAN LEVIN

Mr. Levin's latest book is a study of the young Spinoza (Weybright & Talley).

To generalize about a nation's morale, on the basis of six novels, in translation, is dangerous. But if literature imitates life at all, it may be fair to read these works by four modern Japanese writers as a sort of spiritual barometer. The readings must be cautious, and cannot be exact, but they may support some useful reflections.

The first novel I have in mind is *The Makioka Sisters*, by Junichiro Tanizaki, who won a Nobel Prize. Tanizaki was born in 1886 and died in 1965; the novel was begun "toward the end of World War II." Then come *Snow Country* and *Thousand Cranes*, by Yasunari Kawabata, also a Nobel Prize winner; he was born in 1899 and died, by suicide, this April. (He was 72, ill of cancer.) Next are two short novels by Yukio Mishima, who was born in 1925 and who immolated himself in front of a regiment of the home guard in 1970: *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* and *The Sound of Waves*. Last is *A Personal Matter*, by Kenzaburo Oë, born in 1935; he has received the "Tanizaki prize" and is accounted a leading Japanese writer of the present day.

Thus there is a period of fifty years between the birth of the first writer and that of the last. Keep your eye on this, not on when the novels first appeared—Tanizaki's in 1949, the rest in the fifties and sixties. If we read the novels in the order named, we may get the impression that there really is a *Zeitgeist*—a spirit of the age, whose changes glow through a literature. The lives and the books overlap, there are Hegelian twists, but a progression is nonetheless apparent, and it is startling in its pace and direction.

THE MAKIOKA SISTERS. *By Junichiro Tanizaki. Universal Library (Grosset & Dunlap). 536 pp. Paper $2.95.*

SNOW COUNTRY. *By Yasunari Kawabata. Berkley Publishing Corp. 144 pp. Paper 95¢.*

THOUSAND CRANES. *By Yasunari Kawabata. Berkley Publishing Corp. 144 pp. Paper 95¢.*

THE TEMPLE OF THE GOLDEN PAVILION. *By Yukio Mishima. Berkley Publishing Corp. 288 pp. Paper $1.25.*

THE SOUND OF WAVES. *By Yukio Mishima. Berkley Publishing Corp. 144 pp. Paper $1.25.*

A PERSONAL MATTER. *By Kenzaburo Oë. Grove Press. 214 pp. Paper 95¢.*

Tanizaki's long, rich novel is about a middle-class family at the time of "the China incident," just before World War II. It is panoramic, the characters are in the round. Warmth permeates the book, and the norms and forms of society bind the characters—although the bonds are loosening disquietingly. The strong, reticent second sister manages to pull the rebellious youngest sister through unhappy illicit loves and tragic childbirth, and to marry off the too reticent and sensitive third sister. Yet one realizes that the solutions valid in the past are losing their validity, will not continue to work; the protective conventions of a stolid society are wearing thin; the road is darkening. Tan-

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izaki's translator, Edward G. Seidensticker, writes that the novelist began *The Makioka Sisters* "partly out of despair, and partly out of nostalgia for the last good times on earth."

One more thing: the women seem far more able than the men. (Of course the story is primarily about the women.)

This novel, in its faithfulness to a coherent life, recalls Tolstoy, Verga and other late 19th- and early 20th-century writers who had a strong sense of society. Kawabata's novels, on the other hand, recall to us the movement of art since the *fin de siècle*, in the sign of the "fragmentation of reality" celebrated by Duchamps ("Nude Descending a Staircase"). The central male figure of *Snow Country* is a dangling middle-aged aesthete; the central women characters are two country girls making the transition into geishas. What was at the edge of the camera's eye for Tanizaki becomes the central focus for Kawabata. Here the piercing sadness of beauty and the crassness of reality are interchangeable. And the atmosphere is colder, we are in a colder world. *Snow Country* has been called "a haiku novel," and in a way—via Paris, perhaps—it is: like lovely pen drawings of Fujiyama, lacquered with modern *angoisse*, ambiguity, demoralization.

Thousand Cranes offers the same atmosphere of impotence, crassness, determination to fail. Again it is the male who is frigid and has no real virility. It's as if the fragile and lovely haiku has suddenly gone ugly while retaining its fragility. It reveals too much now; but maybe that is to the good. Ever since Sophocles' play about Oedipus, at least, it has been a literary truism that what is revealed must have been there all the time.

Of the Mishima novels I have mentioned, *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* depicts a male so frustrated as to be mad. It deals with a sexually confused Buddhist student. The theme of the disparity between drab reality and an ethereal, numbing beauty is now terrible in its implications. In *An American Tragedy* Dreiser used for the purposes of social analysis the figure of a confused youth who came from a family of religious enthusiasts; but for Mishima the issue is more muddled and leads to frenzied violence without any clarification. The author's vision is dark and strange: the hero as pyromaniac.

The Sound of Waves is the unbelievably romantic other side of that coin—a hymn to the pastoral, to the good old nature-religion, to everything opposed to modern corruption. Placed side by side with his other novel, it explains Mishima's nostalgia for the Emperor-cult, his superpatriotism, and his suicide as well.

The American occupation soldier in *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, who forces the deranged young Buddhist to stomp on the stomach of the American's pregnant Japanese girl friend, is the arch-emblem of humiliation, the last receptacle of Mishima's frustration and fury over everything that had been happening in and to Japan. The young islander in *The Sound of Waves* proves his manhood and gets the girl. They had stood naked, without making love; now they are consecrated. The world is holy and unindustrial, and a man can be a hero again.

The chasm between the complex twisted bitterness of the one book and the impossible sweetness of the other could be bridged only by an irrational solution.

Finally, in Oë's novel there is no Japan. Norms, mores and morals have become irrelevant, and so has the geisha profession; for there is no real society and no binding customs. This novel's characters are bewildered and humiliated and nameless in the same way as the inhabitants of New York, London, Moscow or any of the other one-culture, one-subculture metropolises. The young man, so insulted by life, is every young man; his pity for his wife, and his disdain, and his last-minute decision not to destroy his malformed child, are all immediately recognizable. No East, no West—just people.

The ending of this novel seems plastered on. If it is phony, this too is modniversal. But it also does make a point: a certain bravery is astir. For the first time in six Japanese novels—and only with the help of a thoroughly defeated girl—the male character is willing to face the facts and not run away. He has acquired a certain tolerance for life, a forbearance. And the guts to make a personal decision of his own, without benefit of society or Emperor or party—as "a personal matter."

If we now read the barometer—cautiously, for these are only six books, and in any case literature is the product

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of a limited class—it says something like this: a process of demoralization must long have been at work in Japan, speeded perhaps by the spiritual decay of Europe after World War I. (It is clear from Tanizaki's novel that "the last good times on earth" had begun to fade long before Pearl Harbor.) This process must have been stepped up, to the point of vertigo, by the total dislocation of World War II, the American firebombings, the two atomic blasts, the American occupation. It's just possible that a new chapter had already begun (with Oë's generation: on the bottom, no way further down) by the time Mishima's dramatic suicide put the ultimate signature on disintegration and despair. □

The Familiar Specter

THE LIMITS TO GROWTH: A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind. *By Donella H. Meadows, Dennis L. Meadows, Jorgen Randers and William W. Behrens III. Universe Books. 204 pp. $6.50. Paper $2.75.*

STEVEN D. ANTLER
Mr. Antler, who has done research in environmental economics, teaches at Memorial University, Newfoundland.

Since 1798, when Malthus first recorded his ingenious observations on geometric versus arithmetic series, the nature of exponential growth rates has fascinated social scientists. Exponential growth is the clown of mathematics; it is the Sunday supplement math puzzle: the man who grows rich by investing a penny at 10 per cent compounded continuously; the Persian courtier who, by bargaining with the king for one grain of rice on the first square of the chessboard, two on the second, four on the third, sixteen on the fourth, and so on, winds up with the whole kingdom's harvest. Exponential growth rates exist in nature as parts of complex systems. When social models attempt to divorce growth principles from the systems that bind them, there is a danger that exponential growth will cease to be a tool and revert to its role as clown. This is, unfortunately, sometimes the case with this otherwise excellent new book.

The Limits to Growth re-examines the familiar specter of coming "global catastrophe": growing population, industrialization and pollution, constrained by fixed resources—especially arable land—add up to disaster in the near future. In the general context of studies of this nature, Meadows and the rest of the M.I.T. group do a remarkable job of avoiding a lapse into mere hand wringing, although the hand wringing is certainly there. The book provides an excellent example of one framework within which global ecology can profitably be studied, but nevertheless it is ultimately unconvincing.

Given data, causal relationships between variables, correlation between variables, and so on, computers are able to "simulate" reality with at times a fair degree of accuracy. The Meadows group has integrated world population, industrial output and availability of resources into one grand simulation model of per capita standard of living throughout the world for the next thirty to fifty years. A "standard run" of the model suggests that we may expect a massive decline in per capita production of both food and industrial products some time in what appears to be the 1980s (the time scale is purposely vague). A second run based upon the hypothesis that world resources as of 1900 have somehow been doubled changes the details but not the conclusions. Another run, this time with "unlimited" resources, again leaves the basic conclusions unchanged.

When the preliminary draft of *The Limits to Growth* was presented in Moscow, the chairman of the meeting argued that man "is no mere biocybernetic device"; his criticism may mirror some political objections to the book, a number of which I believe to be well taken. In addition, however, his statement probably reflects a common distrust of computer models which, when raised by social scientists whose approach is nonquantitative, is often based on misunderstanding. An econometric model almost never "proves" anything, in the normal use of the word. It says "what it says," which is, usually, something like: "seventy-five times out of a hundred we may expect to see the predicted outcome, if the hypothetical relationships between variables that we have proposed are in fact the true relationships between variables—recognizing, of course, that they may not be." Furthermore, critics of econometric models often assume that absolute, measurable changes in variables are more important than direction and rate of change. Since Edgeworth, economists have (rightly, I think) been more concerned with the latter characteristics than with the former. In emphasizing the direction and quality of change, the Meadows group may help to clear up this misunderstanding—although in so doing they have exposed themselves, in the eyes of unsympathetic critics, to the charge of hedging on their conclusions.

The theoretical basis on which Meadows' model rests is supplied by traditional economics. However, there is an annoying kind of two-dimensionality to the analysis. The fact that some fixed resource—e.g., land—cannot indefinitely yield increasing increments of product when worked by a variable factor—e.g., labor—is as old as Ricardo. In the present context, the fixed resource is the earth, while the population of the world is substituted for the farm laborers. With Ricardo, diminishing returns is one part of a broad model of the distribution of wealth. Distribution, production and

NAKED ROUND

Round round the round
She paces
The girl from Iran
Fierce of face
Heavy breasted
Clothed only in her hair
Black snaking
Round round the round
In the foyer of the theater in the round
Lunging like a yak
From the stage round
Where she sits odalisque
While the Sodomites orgy beneath
She paces round round the round
Naked round like a hostile tribe
The girl from Iran
Round round naked round
Her mind done up in many petticoats

Emilie Glen

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the political structure that bounds them, are not and cannot be independent in the Ricardian system. This is why he is a "political economist." In the Meadows study, mechanisms of income distribution are political and social variables taken as outside of the model; they are independent, assumed to be fixed and given.

The doctrine of population growth—that human and animal populations will expand geometrically to the point where further growth is limited by the fixed resource base—is of course Malthus' contribution. It was and remains one of the most ingenious observations in the history of science. As a long-run theory of poverty, however, it has been discredited for some time. In the underdeveloped world, there is a poverty level so low that there exists no significant difference between the standard of living of a childless couple, and one with many children. In this setting, however, children are a form of old-age insurance, since parents surviving past the point where they are able to work will still have their children to take care of them; the childless couple has no security of this sort. There is statistical evidence demonstrating an inverse relationship between infant morbidity rates and parents' fertility rates in Latin America, suggesting that the more parents feel their children will survive the fewer children they tend to have. This is consistent with the general observation that fertility rates and standards of living are inversely related.

This is the point at which the model's shortcomings become clear; if distribution is not a variable within the model, per capita income is left as an unsatisfactory proxy, a poor and unreliable measure of standard of living. Whether growth is exponential or linear, without information on income distribution neither per capita nor absolute levels of output will yield usable information on standards of living. In as sophisticated a simulation model as that of Meadows, we might have expected a computer run carried out under the assumption that industrial output has been redistributed. What would happen if world resources devoted to maintaining inequity were redirected toward development of the Third World? The United States has, in effect, made Vietnam a very wealthy nation; the problem is that the wealth has all been spent in Saigon, or in U.S. armaments plants. What would have happened to Vietnamese population growth had the money been spent on life, not death?

This sort of question is no more farfetched than those behind the "second" and "third" runs of the model, where different levels of resources are assumed. But the question I have posed is qualitative, rather than quantitative. It assumes changes in institutions, rather than in physical quantities. Where the qualitative variables—the institutions—are assumed to be fixed, the only solutions possible are those involving human and physical resources. We are left to attempt to maximize welfare under the existing social structure by adjusting the activities of human beings.

Accordingly, the authors argue that the Green Revolution only "tends to cause widening inequality" when economic inequalities already exist. Wealthier farmers, those able to utilize mechanized agricultural methods, use the new varieties of seed to improve their lot at the expense of the small farmers, thereby increasing the level of poverty and unemployment. As an example of technology's inability to circumvent diminishing returns, the example is patently unconvincing. The problem obviously lies in the social structure that protects the wealthy farmer, not in technology.

The Limits to Growth, then, attempts to analyze qualitative problems as if they were quantitative. One of the early graphs illustrates the fact that "differences in exponential growth rates are widening the economic gap between the rich and poor countries." Of course, this is a bit silly. Differential growth rates do not cause inequalities; rather, they *are* inequalities. The causes are to be found somewhere off the graph. The Meadows group continually confuses the time path of the development of a problem with the problem itself.

This is not to say that qualitative social change can never be dealt with through quantitative methods. The "global model" might, to some extent, lend itself to this very purpose. As it stands, it is still an interesting framework, although there are some points that I find confusing. Pollution appears as a function of per capita industrial output rather than as a function of the absolute level of output. Industrial capital appears as a function of investment, rather than as a function of investment in capital goods industries. The model itself is presented in a highly simplified form in *The Limits to Growth*. It is to be hoped that these failings will be rectified in further studies.

It would be wise, I think, to approach Meadows' recommendations (if they can be called that) with some caution. They are rather mechanical and naive. It is suggested that with stabilized population growth and resource consumption, the rediversion of resources to the agricultural sector, and the institution of resource recycling on a large scale, world population can be stabilized at an average per capita income of $1,800 annually (it is less than $500 at present). Of course this is an attractive prospect, although it still remains to be seen how the $1,800 would be distributed.

More important, however, are the implications of the suggestion. Compulsory birth control is one step away from a preferential system of allocation of the right to reproduce, and two steps away from "scientific" eugenic control and genocide. It should be made clear that the Meadows group goes out of its way to insist that it is *not* suggesting compulsory birth control. But at what point does the "scientific" presentation of impending catastrophe become a rallying ground for those who would favor centrally imposed zero population growth? Similarly, the Meadows group hedges on the issue of economic planning; at what point does the impending catastrophe become a rallying ground for proponents of some repressive form of corporate capitalism?

It would be a mistake, given only the information in *The Limits to Growth*, to read too much into Meadows' proposal for a "steady state." The apolitical nature of the analysis, however, seems to suggest that the proposal represents the way in which things can be changed while insuring that they remain more or less the same. There is no reason to believe that patterns of distribution would be altered in the steady state, and the adjustments

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suggested for the various growth rates are, as mentioned above, tailor-made for the present social structure.

Meadows' study was prepared as a report for the Club of Rome's "Project on the Predicament of Mankind." The Club of Rome itself appears to be an international organization of industrialists and consultants, and is headed by Dr. Aurelio Peccei, a consultant affiliated with Fiat and Olivetti. *The Limits to Growth* was apparently financed through a grant from the Volkswagen Foundation.

Ecology is often thought to be the coming "revolution" of the 1970s. The Club of Rome may in fact remember how the Italian aristocracy has traditionally survived revolution: the way one insures that one will make it alive through a revolution is to lead it. The question the rest of us must ask, of course, is "where"? □

ART

LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

Jackson Pollock wrote of one of his paintings that it "came into existence because I had to paint it. Any attempt on my part to say something about it, to attempt an explanation of the inexplicable, could only destroy it." The antagonism of word and art is no longer an article of faith, and not too many artists would want to claim their art as something inexplicable. A principle of co-expressibility is assumed, in which verbal and visual forms can be translated into one another, with at least partial congruence. In fact, artists of our time have demonstrated that they are a very articulate group: the literature of art in the 20th century has been, to an unremarked extent, in their hands. I mean by this a good deal more than the writing of manifestos—programs of future action which can only be written by the artists themselves. On a broader basis, however, there were substantial magazines such as *De Stijl* (1917-31), with Mondrian's and Theo van Doesburg's articles, and *L'Esprit Nouveau* (1920-27), edited by Le Corbusier and Amédée Ozenfant and including their own pieces along with Fernand Léger's. Later there was *Cobra* (1949-51), which coordinated expressionist figurative art in Northern Europe, and *Zero* (1958-61), which developed pro-technological ideas about art and an aesthetic of systematic structure for a cosmopolitan European scene.

In New York since the late 1940s a steady flow of verbal information has been originated by artists and distributed through public discussions, magazines and catalogues. The discussion group started at an artist-run art school called "Subjects of the Artist," which held regular Friday night lectures and panels in 1948-49. The school collapsed but the lectures were continued at "Studio 35": selections of discussions here in 1949-50 have been published (in *Modern Artists in America*, 1951, editors, Robert Motherwell and Ad Reinhardt). These meetings led to the Club, or Artists' Club, founded in 1949 which continued for two decades. Several magazines specialized in using artists as writers, notably *Tiger's Eye* (1947-49), which printed important texts by Adolph Gottleib, Motherwell, Barnett Newman and Mark Rothko, and *It Is* (1958-60), which covered thoroughly the expressionistic side of New York art.

At present two magazines devote themselves exclusively to the words of artists, *Art Now: New York* (University Galleries, 520 Fifth Avenue, New York City; $15 per year) and *Avalanche* (Kineticism Press, Room 303 E, 200 Park Avenue South, New York City; $7 per year). The former provides paired color reproductions and specific commentary by the artists; the latter takes the form of a transcribed talk show, discursive in subject and "realistic" in style, seeking the gritty feel of the studio and the presence of the artist. There are two kinds of catalogue, small announcements by commercial galleries and booklike texts from museums, and either can be valuable when they contain artists' writings. For instance, between 1944 and 1947 Newman wrote several very significant pieces for the Betty Parsons Gallery, and in 1952 the Museum of Modern Art, in the catalogue *15 Americans*, published texts by Rothko and Clyfford Still which were widely circulated at the time and have been quoted ever since.

The first statements on Pop art from the artists were elicited by Gene Swenson in interviews in 1963 and 1964. This form of data collection developed exceptionally in the 1960s, including a notable series of broadcasts moderated by Bruce Glaser: in 1966, for example, he interviewed Claes Oldenburg, Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol on the subject of Pop art, and Frank Stella and Don Judd on post-Abstract Expressionist abstract art. Much of this firsthand news has not been used; writers have tended to do a new interview rather than interpret the existing ones. The availability of living artists for consultation is, obviously, an advantage to their critics, but it can have an inhibiting effect. The authenticity of the artist's statement tends to constrict writers who feel bound to stay within limits set by their subjects. Thus aspects of an artist's work that he is not interested in may get neglected by modest critics. A similar dependency on the artist leads to bad effects for curators, when they lose control of an exhibition to their subject; that seems to have occurred in the current James Rosenquist retrospective at the Whitney Museum. Neither the choice of works nor the hanging is satisfactory, apparently because the curator was forced to follow the artist's impulses in organizing the show.

The most useful statements are those linked to new work. When an artist has done something new, or thinks he has, a statement functions as *directions for use*. Since the words come from the same source as the painting, they have a value over and above a critic's externally based judgment or hunch. The verbal account may not always help much, of course, as with this from Rosenquist: "A person told me one direction is softer than another, so I call this thing I'm working on 'Horse Blinders.'" On the other hand, the following note by Jasper Johns is very illuminating concerning the problems of designation that he raises in his work: "Another possibility: to see that something has happened. Is this best shown by 'pointing to' or by 'hiding' it?"

Another source of artist-authenticated information is photographic, such as pictures of Matisse at work on a canvas in various states, which *Verve* published in the 1930s, or the documentation of Picasso's "Guernica" by Dora Maar in 1937. In both cases information about process and artistic decision was made public by laying open the work in a way that was restricted earlier to the comparison of sketches and finished work. These are ancestors of the *Art News* series of "so-and-so paints a picture," in which a critic and a photographer map the development of a work. The American artist's reaction to this expanded coverage is to try to control it rather than withdraw from it, on the model of Pollock's statement. By providing a verbal context for new art, artists are still doing what van Doesburg declared to be his aim in the first number of *De Stijl*: by publishing first-person information about the artist's intention, to achieve "a more intimate contact between artists and the public."

Every form of communication has its limits and in the case of artists' statements one risk is that early comments by artists will come to dominate their whole work. The criticism of Rothko, for instance, has never recovered from his statement made years ago, that art should be tragic and timeless. This now resembles the slogan of a commercial

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rather than a critical tool, because a really successful statement has the effect of freezing interpretation. The intention of the artist becomes dominant, but not all the meanings of a work of art can be intended by the artist. There are legitimate areas of critical interest in which an artist is not interested, such as parallels with other artists. There are historical, social and stylistic problems that a critic should feel free to approach without deference to the artist's autonomy. In America we have this pileup of authentic information, but a critical hesitancy to use it, except for the purpose of honoring the artist as individual hero. The first phase of American art criticism after World War II had to do with identifying new movements, and the second with identifying the individuals within the movements, as is shown by the recent shower of retrospectives and monographs. The next step is generalization based on the specific information gathered in *some* of the monographs and at this point the critic and the quotable artist may find themselves, regretfully, in opposition. □

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

There are various kinds of merit to be found in a theatre event. Gore Vidal's *An Evening With Richard Nixon And*— is not "drama" but I favor it (Shubert Theatre). There are obvious criticisms to be made—where's the surprise, the tension, etc.—but I enjoyed the visit. All the speeches given George Irving to speak as Nixon are verbatim quotes. Isn't that enough to cause shudders and laughter?

It may be old stuff to you, but not to me. I listen to very few political speeches. With most noted figures in so-called statecraft I am as I am with actors at an audition. The actor has only to read several lines for me to assess his quality and suitability for a role, though out of courtesy I may permit him to read further. I once heard Jimmy Walker for about five minutes: I recognized him at once as an affable and possibly companionable rogue. As for our dear President, I have seen and heard him on television, observed him on the street; his *opinions* after these brief encounters have become supererogatory: I know the man.

Still I didn't recall his prose in its specific content. He is, after all, part of history's comedy, and history is serious. I therefore found all he said in Gore Vidal's transcription fascinating and frequently funny. The historical context from the man's green youth through to his present high estate is rapidly processed, the montage witty, the staging by Edwin Sherin sufficiently deft and George Irving's impersonation amusing. The total account is summary, biased—the basic attitude disheartened, but the picture on the face of it befits the facts. Contemporary politics in general is a self-made mockery—to some a comedy, to others a tragedy. Other attitudes may be assumed but, to begin with, the first impression is natural. In any case, for all its frivolity, *An Evening With Richard Nixon And*— has more substance than most of the "art" Broadway now has to offer.

I also liked Stephen Newman's George Washington and Philip Sterling's Eisenhower. I must report, too, that on opening night several people in the balcony hissed; if Nixon had no supporters there would be little interest in the lampoon.

That Championship Season by Jason Miller at the Public Theatre is a good show. Many habitués of that peppy institution have expressed surprise that the new play was old-fashioned realism rather than "experimental." There may be a sense of relief in this astonishment: we really haven't changed as much as is supposed; we are not altogether "new."

The play concerns five men in a small Pennsylvania town who gather for a reunion at the house of their old high-school basketball coach. They come at regular intervals to reminisce and rejoice at their boyhood triumph as winners of the trophy which attested to their championship. The coach is their idol and they the living witnesses of the rightness of his stern discipline and "philosophy." Religiously, they cling to the memory of their adolescent splendor.

We soon discover that, apart from the fact that the famous championship was won by dirty tactics, each of these men is an empty, a damaged bag. The violently masculine coach is not a well man. One of the others is an alcoholic who scorns himself and his companions. Another, now the town mayor, is an incompetent fathead, dependent on the patronage of the rich guy among them. The latter, son of a poor Italian immigrant, is having an affair with the mayor's slut of a wife. A third fellow is now the high school superintendent and the mayor's campaign manager. He wishes to enter politics himself; he envies the power and success many of the others seem to have achieved. But he is being dumped by his friends because he has no ability for his job. The coach keeps him in line, as in one way or another he does all of them. For he is forceful, moralistically eloquent and devoutly ruthless.

These men are all practicing Catholics without a speck of true faith: all that is left of their religion is clannishness and ritualistic gesture. The coach is a racist and an anti-Semite: his heroes are Joe McCarthy and Father Coughlin. He is a sincere hypocrite; his goal is absolute domination in the petty puddle of the township.

The points made smack of a boldness readily acceptable to all but the most backward or totally indifferent among us. Why then the pleasure with which this play has been received? It has vigor, its dialogue is salty and its unmasking of the contradiction between mask and face, myth and reality is heightened, to speak in the play's vein, by a "no bullshit" forthrightness.

The play's attraction goes even deeper; there is something hammy in it. This is not altogether a detraction. Most hamminess in writing and acting turns us off; but there is also such a thing as talented hamminess, just as there is melodrama which provokes resistance and melodrama which grips us, as in the novels of Dickens and Balzac. *That Championship Season* is "ham" with talent. Its story and "message" is by now largely old stuff, to a considerable degree imitative, but real blood flows through it. The author's sentiments are authentic, his conviction streaked with acrid humor, genuine. The play affects us less than it entertains. The mixture assures audience enthusiasm.

On the whole, with moments of not too reprehensible overacting, the play is well cast and well acted. Walter McGinn, Charles Durning, Michael McGuire, Paul Sorvino, Richard Dysart, under A. J. Antoon's knowing direction, acquit themselves admirably.

Part of what I have said about Jason Miller's play applies to David Wiltse's *Suggs* at the Forum Theatre of Lincoln Center. It tells us how awful New York has become. The theme is the

V.I.P.

At one with it?
Like a clock, perhaps.

The furniture keeps,
But they have scraped away
His smile,
His footsteps,
His shadow.

The vibrations of his pain
Are recorded in the walls.

He lies beneath split-lip hollyhocks
And cabbages like beheaded kings.

Stephen Stepanchev

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same as that of *The Prisoner of Second Avenue,* all shrewd and well-maneuvered gags, and of several musicals and by now well-established jokes. New York is filthy, tricky, heartless, overrun by derelicts, drug addicts, panhandlers, muggers, prostitutes, depressed and case-hardened employers, dissatisfied wives, crooks. It makes bums of us all.

I cannot say that this is false, though I know lots of fine people in the city—all of them, I suppose, members of the theatre audience. But the point is certainly no discovery; in fact, it too has become hackneyed. Still *Suggs* is engagingly ironic, swift in pace, happily devoid of portentousness. A commonplace is stated with good-humored agility.

It is nicely played by William Atherton as Suggs, the youth exposed to the farcical disaster of the metropolis, as well as by all the others, particularly Lee Lawson who enacts several different roles of variously marred women. Suggs himself is never depressed or woefully overwhelmed by what happens to him. That tends to make the evening agreeable, despite the mishaps it sketches. □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

It troubles me that I am almost totally unresponsive to *Fritz the Cat,* an animated cartoon feature, directed by Ralph Bakshi from the strip created by Robert Crumb for Head Comics. Fritz, a cat both in comic-book terms and in the current jargon, is super hip to every breeze that blew upon the country's questing youth of a few years ago, and the picture holds up his instant causes and borrowed principles to good-natured destruction. Thus Fritz, master lecher, organizes group sex in a bathtub, which exploit is raided by the prurient fuzz; and Fritz, the free-souled undergraduate, burns his lecture notes and with them one of the larger buildings on New York University's Greenwich Village campus.

This energetic cat then journeys to Harlem in the cause of racial brotherhood, has the misfortune to address a black bartender as "Boy," but makes amends by jumping to the roof of a parked car and treating the passers-by to a speech so provocative that the ensuing race riot can be quelled only by calling in (I presume from Southeast Asia) a flight of jets whose firebomb attack scatters the insurgents and incinerates the greater part of Harlem.

Fritz moves west, shepherded by a women's libber (I feel an anachronism there, though the point of view did predate the movement), where he runs foul of the motorcycle-hypodermic cult and gets himself adopted by some for-real bombers, who take advantage of his feline agility on high structures to eliminate a considerable area of California. One understands, thus, that *Fritz the Cat* is bent on depreciating youthful follies, while not overlooking the worse than foolish responses of the alarmed and puzzled establishmentarian elders. In principle, I should applaud such iconoclasm, and in principle I do. It is the execution I deplore.

My spirits began to droop when the two cops sent to spoil the fun in the bathtub turned out to be pigs (Disney's little pigs grown up and turned gross), who spoke in the "da (gulp)" accents popularly associated with mental deficiency. They fell still further when I discovered that the blacks were to be presented as crows (though the finery on these birds did trick me into some racist snickers). It isn't the bad taste I object to (I won't also be tricked into protesting the manners of a picture whose style consists in boasting that it has none), but the lack of invention. Portraying the police as pigs and the blacks as crows—or for that matter the insouciant hero as a cat—does not add much to the picturesqueness of contemporary imagery.

It occurred to me early in the proceedings that the picture expected its very high level of outrageousness to cover up its quite low level of imagination. As the one-for-one equivalents were rolled out in bold and rude succession, I felt my face turning wooden from exposure to a human comedy that never found a perspective for comment other than the mechanical one of exaggeration. There are some funny lines—whether or not Crumb originals I do not know—most of them depending on the almost infallible device of understatement. However, the episodes and characters seem to me utterly devoid of the ironic twist that makes satire the cruelest of blood sports. It is all "zap!, powie!, dirty word," and on to the next obvious foible. Even in the interest of redressing the balance, I find that procedure wearisome.

A good thing—far and away the best thing—about the picture was the graphics treatment of the New York City background. The scenes were drawn in a sketchy, melancholy sepia, and then at the end, when the closing credits were being run, these renderings reverted to photographs of the forlorn, scaling, garbagy neighborhoods through which all New Yorkers go their ways. The artists responsible seemed to be saying that, kidding aside, New York is no joke. That's right. □

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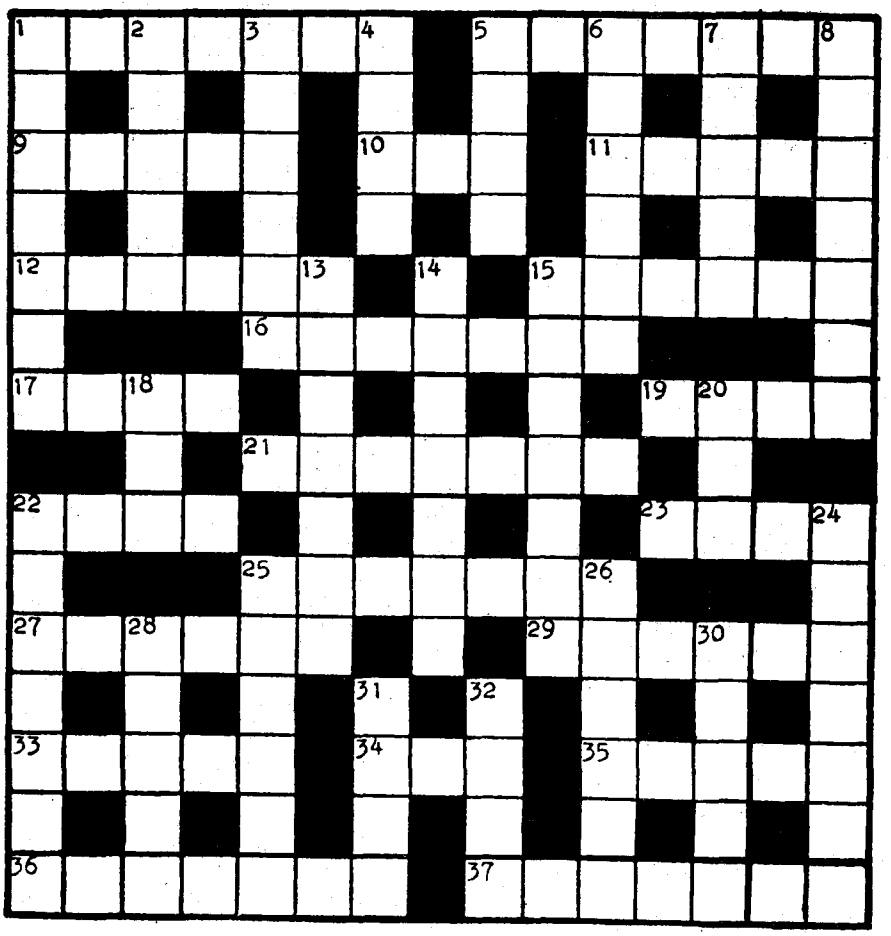
Crossword Puzzle No. 1443

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1, 10, 9, 15 across and 27 Fancy arrangement on the improper edge of the flower garden? You might grumble if you do! (3,2,2,3,5,4,2,3,3)
11 Sometimes paired with kicking drink around four. (5)
12 What wrong-doers sometimes make, as mid-day comes. (6)
16 Some hat! It's designed for occasions when you might drop in quite informally. (2-5)
17, 5 across, 20 and 30 The air nowadays would be worth £0.02½, evidently. (4,1,4,2,8)
19 One who employs a tricky ruse? (4)
21 Welters, though out of condition, engage in sport this way. (7)
22 and 31 down Defeat the rain, perhaps.
23 Barnum's egress. (4)
25 Said to be upset at what the bride or groom might take? Take it all back! (7)
29 Briefly sought the rest of what some rugs should be. (6)
33 The spirit sounds as though it might be connected with TV. (5)
35 Wild dog, or mad dog in here. (5)
36 Not artificially produced, it can't be 32.
37 Makes an offer for certain ships? (7)

DOWN

1 "Neat, but not gaudy" would never describe them. (7)
2 Might be overt, but more likely to be covert. (5)
3 Building half the Samõan town, to a public official. (6)
4 Take into account a little writing, but the whole type is not filled in. (4)
5 Things turn on them, but not the type that have blades. (4)
6 Lo! A 20 sort in the plant! (6)
7 A French novelist, about fifty, could make such a slip. (5)
8 and 34 across Fight where no admission is expected? (4-3-3)
13 Sortied out of the compound. (7)
14 A little street in the fuel producing region on the shore has such a description. (7)
15 Animal operation Hitler couldn't quite manage. (3,4)
18 and 25 down What you might expect after a hand of poker with such as Rexford Tugwell. (3,6)
22 Leave the coach rated badly in here. (7)
24 Perhaps Kennedy debts could become a little boring. (7)
26 Certainly not a peace study for one responsible for such as Attica. (6)
28 To be suggestive of a believer in the past? (5)
32 Lower 4 for the apartment? (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1442

ACROSS: 1 and 18 down Pitch and toss; 4 Off-day; 11 Rapallo; 12 Neutral; 13 and 20 down Passenger pigeon; 14 Tango; 15 Woodrow Wilson; 17 Warren Harding; 22 India; 24 Takes care; 25 Evocate; 26 Obadiah; 27 Nasser; 28 Adage. DOWN: 2 Impasto; 3 Cullender; 6 Durango; 7 Yellow; 8 and 5 down Grapefruit; 9 Longhorn steer; 10 Andrew Jackson; 16 Lady's maid; 19 Nearing; 21 Lethe; 23 Agate.

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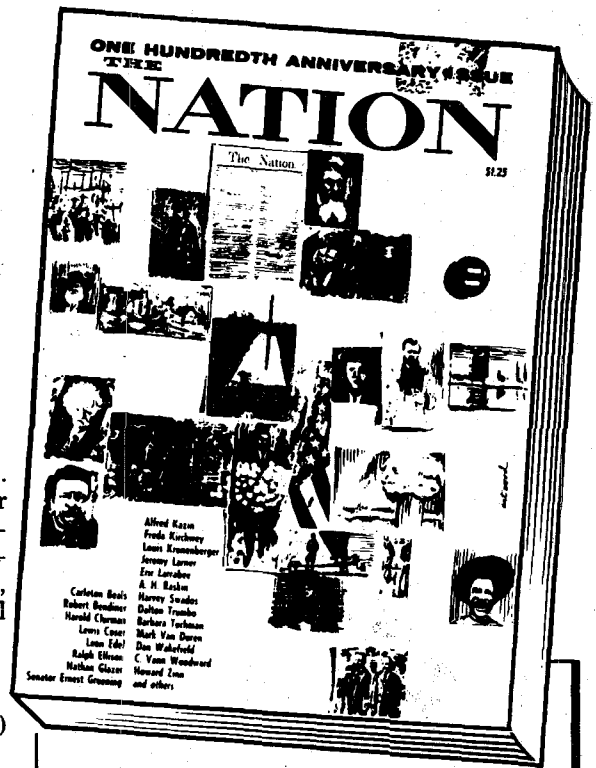

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